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# T R A V E L S

I N

EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA;

D E S C R I B I N G

CHARACTERS, CUSTOMS, MANNERS, LAWS,  
and PRODUCTIONS of NATURE and ART:

C O N T A I N I N G

Various R E M A R K S on the P O L I T I C A L and  
C O M M E R C I A L I N T E R E S T S

O F

G R E A T B R I T A I N :

And delineating, in particular,

A N E W S Y S T E M

For the Government and Improvement of the BRITISH  
S E T T L E M E N T S in the

E A S T I N D I E S :

Begun in the YEAR 1777, and finished in 1781.

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I N T W O V O L U M E S .

V O L . I .

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L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. MURRAY, N<sup>o</sup>. 32, FLEET-STREET.

MDCCLXXXII.

46/67/777



T R A V E L S

I N

EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA;

P R E F A C E.

CHARACTERS, CUSTOMS, MANNERS, LAWS,

and PRODUCTIONS OF NATURE AND ART.

CONTAINING

THE Author of this work,

though no candidate for

literary fame, is induced, by the

importance of the subject,

to deliver to the public the con-

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His excursions into foreign coun-

tries opened an immense field of

observation, and sometimes con-

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ropeans.

V O L I

THE

Author of this work,

CONTAINING



## P R E F A C E.

**T**HE Author of this work, though no candidate for literary fame, is induced, by the importunities of men distinguished for public and private virtue, to deliver to the public the contents of a genuine correspondence. His excursions into foreign countries opened an immense field of observation, and sometimes conducted him to sources of intelligence, not often accessible to Europeans.



THE love of novelty and variety is an universal passion; and an account of the policy and arts; the usages, customs, and manners of distant or unfrequented nations, if related with fidelity, though unadorned, must form at all times an interesting narrative to the inquisitive and the learned. But in the present period of extended intercourse, when the rudest tribes of mankind may be brought to act in the general system, the productions of every soil, the nature of every climate, the real character, abilities, and circumstances of every people, command attention from statesmen and legislators, and form a necessary branch in the science of political œconomy.



# P R E F A C E.

æconomy. Commerce has become the great source of jealousy and competition among the powers of Europe ; and the rank of each in the political scale must be estimated by that standard. Great Britain, by her commercial opulence and grandeur, no less than by the excellence of her civil constitution, has excited, for near a century, the admiration of the world. And if she can no longer maintain her importance in that line, she must resign her pre-eminence among nations. But, while her dominion declines in one hemisphere, it may flourish in the other ; or she may flourish in both as a commercial power, while she contracts the limits of empire.



THE revolution in our American provinces, begun by the invidious exercise of power over a kindred people, and encouraged by the misconduct of British Commanders in Chief, has presented to rival powers a splendid object of ambition. But the resources of the British government, in the commerce of the East, are certainly immense. And the arrangements of Asiatic policy, now under the review of the legislature, if conducted by superior wisdom, may compensate, in some degree, the calamities of an unfortunate war, and retrieve the glory of the British name.

If



# P R E F A C E. vii

IF Great Britain has soared to an envied height of grandeur, it was not by means of armies marching triumphantly over hostile countries. Her distant dependencies, the great source of her wealth and power, originated in a spirit of commerce and colonization. In the day of her adversity, let this nation recur to those maxims, which conducted her once to prosperity and glory. Greater renown, as well as greater advantage is to be acquired by retaining and improving, than by extending conquests.

THE scene of these Travels lies, for the most part, in those coun-



tries of Asia and Africa, whose trade, already so lucrative, might be rendered of inestimable importance to the revenue and wealth of Britain ; nay, even the means of relieving the public from an incumbrance of debt, which must otherwise soon become insupportable. The chief object of their publication is, to furnish some hints for the establishment of such political arrangements in India, as may be equally conducive to the interests of that country and those of England—To compose the distractions of the Mogul empire, by restoring the king of Delhi to his hereditary imperial throne ; by forming an alliance between that prince



prince and the British nation, on principles of mutual security and advantage; and by fixing the limits, and settling the claim of subordinate states—To restore to deserted lands their exiled inhabitants; to erect, among a much-injured people, the standard of liberty and justice; whence improvements in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, would flow of course: to raise the drooping spirits of the sad ryot \* and artisan to confidence and hope; to rescue millions of mankind from savage anarchy and oppression; and to restore them to the enjoyment of property, liberty, and life.

\* Husbandman.

THE



ix      P R E F A C E.

THE remarks of the Author on the genius of different nations in Asia and Africa ; on subjects of policy and commerce ; on curiosities of art and nature ; and in general, on whatever occurred as most entertaining or interesting, while he sojourned in those distant quarters of the globe, form the most considerable part of the following correspondence. But he has also had adventures nearer home, and these not a little diversified. He has of late years been led frequently to visit all the great commercial cities on the continent of Europe : and, if his communications with trading companies, or with men of rank and fortune, have sometimes enabled him



him to look behind the scene in public business, these volumes may not only serve to gratify, in some measure, a general curiosity, but may also suggest some useful hints to princes and statesmen.



## ERRATA in Vol. I.

- Page 1. line 13. instead of *or*, read *of*.  
 40. — 16. after *principles*, insert *speaking the same language*.  
 53. — 22. instead of *Tremicourt*, read *Fremicourt*.  
 54. — 7. dele *at that time*.  
 58. — 16. instead of *three*, read *eight*.  
 61. — 1. instead of *we*, read *I*.  
 68. in the note, instead of *Carnatic or*, read *Carnatic AND*.  
 77. last line but one, for *Cbezeaux*, read *de Cbezeaux*.  
 91. line 5. instead of *shipmates*, read *shipmasters*.  
 92. in the note, between *capital* and *of*, insert *port*.  
 93. line 3. instead of *den*, read *cage*.  
 124. — 21. for *gun-room*, read *guard-room*.  
 142. — 14. for *orced*, read *forced*.  
 167. — 21. dele the words *to your excellency*.  
 200. note, last line, instead of *gravel*, read *sand*. — There is no gravel in Holland.  
 227. line 8. dele the , after *aloes*, and read *aloes fucotra*.  
 235. — 22. dele the , after *cottons*, and read *woollen and cotton draperies*.  
 283. — 18. instead of *convened*, read *can vend*.  
 295. — 14. for *gums*, read *gems*.  
 321. in the note, for *civilized*, read *polished*.  
 382. line 15. between *common* and *statute*, insert *and*.  
 423. — 21. for *on*, read *or*.  
 434. — 17. dele *or*.  
 444. — 9. after *light*, dele *and*.  
 450. — 19. after *complexion*, insert *united*.

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TRAVELS

IN

EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA.

LETTER I.

To R—— W——, Esq; London.

Antwerp, 12th June, 1777.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

MY health, which has constantly been impaired by the air of London, has as constantly been restored by that of Holland: an effect, which I should hardly have attributed to the climate or that country, but rather to my voyage

VOL. I.

B

thither,



thither, had not my experience been so decisive. For, however singular it may appear, the feverish symptoms, that accompanied me from London, and disappeared in Holland, returned, in all their malignity, in proportion as I removed from the moist and foggy atmosphere of the United Provinces, and breathed the purer air of Brabant. I am now confined to this city by a state of health so languid and precarious, that I know not when it may be practicable for me to pursue my journey. Yet, in such a valetudinary situation, I feel sensible satisfaction, not only from the hospitality and kind attention of Governor Plunket and Mr. Hollier, but, if possible, still more from that entertainment and instruction with which their conversation abounds.

By this time, it is probable, you begin to construct my silence into neglect, or perhaps into a breach of positive engagement, since I led you to expect an early and regular correspondence. But the mention of a  
few



few particulars will serve, I hope, to clear me from all imputations of that nature. Give me leave then to observe, that from Holland I had nothing new or interesting to communicate to you, having formerly, both in letters and in conversation, exhausted my remarks on that country. You will also observe, that, it being my original intention either to have returned to Britain, or to have proceeded to Paris, in the course of a few weeks; a correspondence in these circumstances, became less incumbent, or rather altogether unnecessary.—And, not to trouble you with superfluous vindication, my hours of leisure have indeed been so fully engaged in researches into the trade of France, Holland, Denmark, and Portugal with the East Indies, that my other ideas were almost completely absorbed in those important objects of discussion.

BUT, having been detained here beyond my expectation, it is now full time to



discharge the duty of friendship. And I gladly embrace, while yet in my power, an occasion of cultivating that pleasing intercourse and exchange of sentiments we have so often indulged, but which must soon suffer a long interruption by our respective destinations to different hemispheres. My residence here, though in other respects involuntary and reluctant, has indeed been attended with one advantage, which a traveller would be almost tempted to celebrate. It has furnished me with an opportunity of enquiring into the present state of this ancient city, once the emporium of Europe, and still distinguished by the wealth and wise œconomy of its inhabitants.

It is known to all Europe, that the commerce of Amsterdam was founded on the ruin of that of Antwerp. The policy of the Dutch operating on the necessities of Austria, and the unsuspecting candour of England, formed and confirmed those famous treaties whereby the empire



pire yielded up the port and trade of this city a sacrifice to the mercantile views of Holland.—The *Scheld* is navigable by ships of the largest burthen up to Antwerp: but two forts, on opposite sides of that river, oppose the passage of vessels above a limited burthen, which is very small. A report, propagated by the cunning of the Dutch, that there are five large vessels sunk in the *Scheld* between these forts, has strangely gained credit, not only in countries at a distance from that river, but in *Brabant* itself, and even in *Antwerp*. It is amusing to reflect on the easy credulity of the world. How much are mankind imposed on by vague reports, and the authority of universally-received opinions! I am well assured by persons of the first rank and character in this place, that in the *Scheld* there is not one vessel sunk, nor any other obstruction than the treaties and forts I have already mentioned, to the passage of a 74 gun ship up to the walls of Ant-



werp, where a spacious and secure bason is formed for the entertainment of any number of ships of any burthen.

THIS city, which is in circuit about four English miles, is fortified all round, except at the river.—In the north-west quarter stands the citadel. The out-works are very extensive; the walls in good condition; but the ditches here and there filling up. It would require a garrison of at least fifteen thousand men to defend the works with effect. The streets and houses, all of which are spacious, are maintained in good repair, and preserve their original cleanliness and neatness. Of the old houses, many are superb, and of the new, many elegant; nor do the churches and public buildings discover any marks of decay by time, or of the decline of commerce.—The magnificent house of the celebrated *Rubens*, which in front presents to your view ten windows on a floor, is still kept



kept in good order, having been frequently repaired, and, as I conceive, at the public expence.

THE exchange, which is the most spacious as well as the most commodious in the world, and a beautiful piece of Grecian architecture, is still preserved in high order, although it is resorted to by only about half a dozen bankers, and as many brokers. Of the canals that communicated with the river in the days of its magnificence and splendour, some are filled up, but they might be easily opened. Antwerp contains about seventy thousand souls, whereof about ten thousand are on the poor's list. The police of the city, with regard to the poor, is as bad as it is singular. There is an ample fund for their maintenance, which is distributed not among those persons who are really indigent, but among the families of such persons as happened to be enrolled among the poor many generations backward, when it first became



an object of a generous police to provide for those who were unable to provide for themselves.—In Antwerp there is little or no trade or manufactures. The inhabitants are *religious* to excess; for I avoid the odious and illiberal term *superstitious*, which the different sects of Christians are so apt to bestow on each other. They are remarkably gay in their drefs and equipage. The women, who are of a small stature, are delicate, neat, and beautiful; but, being almost excluded from society, and taught only the internal management of their houses and of their children, they are not so social as the ladies of France and England. They are generally of a pale complexion, a circumstance which is perhaps owing to their constant confinement in their houses: for they never walk abroad or take any exercise, except upon Sunday evenings and public days, when they take the air in their carriages upon the grand street (called the *Rue la Mer*) and covered canal, or in the environs of the city.

WITH



WITH regard to the wealth of Antwerp, it is computed to be superior to that of any city of Europe, of equal size and numbers. Their money is lent out on foreign securities, from two and an half, to four and an half, and five per cent. Of late, they have vested a great deal in the bank of Vienna. And it is a fact of notoriety, that of the whole number of inhabitants of Antwerp, not one family or person spends the interest of his money.

THE old mortgage, which is supposed to be still owing to the Dutch, for money lent to the citizens of Antwerp, for the purpose of defraying the expence of a grand reception which they gave to one of their princes, and which hung long as a dead weight upon the trade of that city, will appear, upon a fair statement, to be nearly, if not wholly, discharged. But still the city owes large sums in its corporate capacity, although, like the Hollanders, individuals are at their ease, and in great affluence. The



## TRAVELS *in*

The public debt is rendered easy by a low interest, not exceeding two per cent. But it will never be reduced, nor even confined to its present amount, otherwise than by the revival of commerce.

THIS people look forward with wishful hopes towards the re-establishment of commerce, and the subversion of that infamous treaty, which robbed them of their natural rights.—I cannot suppose that this desirable event is at any great distance. It must needs be a mortifying reflection to the first power in Europe, that its ports should be shut up by a solemn treaty with one of the weakest states in that quarter of the world, and many of its principal cities garrisoned by the troops of a moderate Republic. The death of the Empress will put the reins of justice in the hands of a prince of great talents and virtues, as well as of high ambition, formed by nature, and called by Providence, to render his dominions flourishing, and



and to make his people happy. He is now in the thirty-seventh year of his age; for his goodness and affability, admired by all his people, who are as anxiously impatient as loyalty will allow them to be, for the arrival of the happy hour of offering their voluntary allegiance at his throne.

ANTWERP will enjoy advantages superior to those of any other country. The *Scheld*, a noble river, and which communicates with the Rhine, the Maese, and the Lys; a quick passage into the German sea and the British channel; together with several excellent ports on the Adriatic sea; are such forcible instruments in the hands of a powerful and political prince, as will enable him to participate largely in the commerce of both the EAST and the WEST, and to carry it on with peculiar advantage.—It will be the interest of England, as well as of France, to labour to divert the Emperor from such ideas; because the Hollanders (on whose

ruin



ruin the commerce of Austria must rise) have been already at the summit of their political grandeur, and are now beginning to descend by a slow but constant motion, which will acquire additional velocity in its progress, and terminate only in the fall of the Republic. This event will happen when the Dutch East-India mines are exhausted, and the whole wealth of the United Provinces confined to a few individuals in the trading cities of Holland and Zealand. The rivalry and increase of the Dutch trade and power are not to be dreaded ; they will fall of themselves : but it may become a subject of political enquiry, how far it may be judicious to manage the aspiring ambition of a powerful nation, enjoying such capital local advantages as may enable them to raise up again the fabric of their ruined commerce, and even to become one of the first maritime powers in Europe. Should the navigation of the *Scheld* be revived, and its natural prerogatives restored ; and should the Emperor avail himself



himself of all the advantages which encourage him to cultivate commerce; his dominions would be an ample field, to which thousands from all nations would migrate, with a certain prospect of reaping a plentiful harvest.

I NEED not describe Bruffels. Being a seat of government, and the residence of a court, it naturally encourages luxury, and various kinds of vice. The once-opulent cities of Ghent and Bruges<sup>a</sup> are melancholy monuments of what they were. Ostend is well situated for a small seaport, and a neat but not an extensive line of commerce, as the harbour is not only incapable of being enlarged for the

<sup>a</sup> The inhabitants of these forlorn cities lately cleared and repaired the streets, and decorated, by lime-water and paint, those places which, some years ago, wore the melancholy appearance of desertion, for the reception of the Emperor. This contrivance was well enough calculated to impress his Imperial Majesty's mind with an idea of what those cities had been, and were still capable of being.



reception of ships of burthen, but is of difficult and dangerous egress, as well as access.—I shall write to you soon from some place in Flanders.

I am, &c.

LETTER



LETTER II.

To R—— W——, Esq; London.

St. Omer, the 25th June, 1777.

**H**AVING determined to try the effects of the air of St. Omer, I came thither by water from Brussels, through Ghent, Bruges, Ostend, Newport, and Dunkirk. The accommodations in the barks, on the canals of Austrian Flanders, are infinitely superior to those of the Trackskuits of Holland, being considerably larger, with excellent apartments below for three several classes of passengers, and a shaded quarter-deck, with benches for them to sit on, when they choose to take the air. There is a good dinner provided for each apartment; and the company may be accommodated with wines of different kinds, tea, coffee, and Flemish beer. The price of travelling, as well as the fare, is remarkably cheap; and the



the best apartments are always filled with good company.—At Dunkirk, I saw the infamous pirate Cunningham. He has had the audacity, at this place, to insult Lord Ferrers; whose noble mind treated him with a proper contempt. That nobleman had, in the course of conversation, remarked, that there was a very material distinction between the case of a native of America in arms against Britain, and that of a native of Britain in similar circumstances. Cunningham, who is an Irishman, and who, of course, was alarmed at this doctrine, vowed, in Lord Ferrers's presence, that he would watch his movements; and that, if he could discover his yacht, he would follow and sink her, with all on board.

THIS incident, with many others, bring my native country full into my view, and awaken the liveliest concern for her present critical situation. The *amor patriæ* is never so sensibly felt as in foreign countries. It is said, I think, by  
the



the Duke of Rochefoucault, that absence destroys weak passions, but encreases strong; as the wind extinguishes a candle, but blows up a fire. If this be a just theory, I may take not a little credit to myself for my patriotism.

THE war between Great Britain and America is the general topic of conversation in all companies on the continent. Foreigners seem as much interested in the issue of that contest, as the parties principally concerned. Nine persons in ten over all Spain, France, Brabant, Holland, and Germany, avow their wishes for success and independency to the British American colonies. The different governments of these kingdoms and states are restrained from avowing sentiments of the same kind, only from motives of policy and temporary convenience.—It might, indeed, be naturally imagined, that such European powers as have colonies of their own, would entertain apprehensions, that the independence of the English settlements might give

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countenance and protection to a general revolution over all America; and that the united influence and commerce of that hemisphere might exclude from Asia and Africa, the maritime nations that at present enjoy the trade of the world. But their idea is (if I may judge of the sentiments of courts from the universal voice of the people) that America will be able to resist the authority and arms of Britain until both parties are exhausted; by which means Britain must, of necessity, yield up her pretensions to sovereignty over her colonies; soon become bankrupt; and thus lose her weight in the political scale of Europe: as, on the other hand, they are persuaded, that North America will be so weakened as, instead of annoying the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and French colonies in her neighbourhood, to become dependent on the states to which these colonies belong.

To imagine that Britain will relinquish her dominion over her American colonies,



as long as the nation is capable of raising supplies, would be as absurd as to suppose the Americans capable of long resistance without foreign aid. But if this people should hold out even for the present campaign, that aid would undoubtedly be afforded. Prejudices against Great Britain, and prepossessions in favour of America, will excite an enthusiasm in noble minds, and introduce a spirit of chivalry, which will co-operate with the views and animate the exertions of policy in supporting the efforts of the British colonies.

BUT should the wealth of Great Britain, notwithstanding the difficulties she will be forced to encounter, prevail in this arduous contest; the forced submission of a numerous people, possessing so flourishing and extensive a territory, would prove but a temporary cessation of hostilities, ready to break out on the first favourable occasion with redoubled fury, if their fidelity should not be conciliated by other



means than those of fear : and, on the other hand, should the colonies, aided by foreign powers, after a long and bloody struggle, shake off, what, in the language of resentment and passion, they call the yoke of Britain, they would, in all probability, fall under the power of some other nation or nations, whose tyranny would convince them, when too late, how little reason they had to wish for a total separation from the mother-country. The wisdom and genius both of Great Britain and America ought, therefore, to be employed, not in forming plans of war, but in framing treaties of accommodation.—I shall, for the present, suppose myself called to the most important office with which ever mortal was dignified, that of arbiter of the differences between England and her colonies. In this character, then, I propose to the contending parties the following terms of accommodation.

1. To revise the acts of trade, on liberal, constitutional, and political principles.

2. To



2. To consider Great Britain as the grand magazine of American produce, and her universal agent in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

3. To allow America to establish manufactures suited to her various climates; and the free exercise of trade within her own limits.

4. To restrain her navigation as heretofore, and to confine her importations to the manufactures of the British dominions, and foreign goods directly from Britain.

5. To comprehend, in the general regulations respecting North America, the West India, Bahama, and Bermuda islands.

6. To repeal all laws imposing taxes of any kind in America, or restraining the internal trade of the colonies with each other.



7. To constitute in America a general government similar to that of Ireland; reserving to the respective provinces and islands legislative powers, in certain cases, and under certain limitations.

8. To establish a Lord Lieutenant's court, war-office, navy-office, boards of customs and excise, and other departments of state; together with general courts of law, chancery, admiralty, and exchequer; all subject to the revision of the British government.

9. To confer titles, honours, and offices on native Americans, and others residing in America, distinguishing those persons who have invariably preserved their loyalty to the king, and attachment to the parent state.

10. THAT a general act of indemnity be passed, extending to all persons willing to take the benefit thereof, on or before a certain fixed day.

11. THAT



11. THAT every establishment, civil and military, in America, shall be supported by taxes and duties imposed by her own parliament.

12. THAT America shall bear the charges incurred by Britain in the present contest, reckoning to a certain fixed day, as the date of the resolution of independence.

13. THAT of every war in which Great Britain may hereafter be engaged, America shall pay a proportional part of the expence.

14. THAT a lord lieutenant shall be frequently appointed, who shall be a native of Britain, enjoying high titles and an independent fortune in Britain,

15. THAT native Americans shall be competent to be appointed in all military places



places and stations, those only being excepted, which must be filled by general officers.

16. THAT all regiments shall be removed from one place to another by rotation, as formerly ; and recruited with natives of Europe, when it is their turn to go to America ; but that all regiments on service in America shall be completed by American recruits, especially before their embarkation for Europe.

17. THAT the Protestant shall be the established religion ; but that there shall be an unlimited toleration of all religious sects whatever.

18. THAT such British laws as concern the colonies, shall be recognized and affirmed by a general act of the first parliament to be held in America ; from which period, the British parliament shall cease to have power to create any new law to bind America ; nor shall Ame-  
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rica have power, without the previous consent of the British parliament, to introduce any law that shall abrogate, amend, or explain, any act whatever, already established by the authority of the British parliament, and recognised by that of America.

19. THAT the debts contracted by the congress be made chargeable on the new government of America; those persons and provinces being exempted from any part of this expence, who have continued well affected to the government of Britain.

20. THAT the currency of gold and silver shall be reduced to the same value throughout the several provinces and islands; and that the exchange with Britain shall vary from British sterling only according to the estimation of credit, and such circumstances as may occasion a fluctuation in the common occurrences of trade.

21. THAT



21. THAT to the titles of the king be added that of *North America*.—I hope it will not be thought an act of treason, with the most submissive loyalty, humbly to propose, that when *North America* shall be added to the titles of the sovereign, the word *France* be omitted.—His majesty's titles will then run thus, “King of Great Britain, North America, and Ireland, &c.”

I SHOULD now attempt to illustrate the wisdom as well as justice of these arrangements; but I am afraid I have already exhausted your patience. Give me leave only to observe, that the establishment of a parliament, a court, a navy, an army, titles, departments of state, and the other distinctions specified, would have a natural tendency to introduce into America mutual jealousies and luxury. The political consequences of these are obvious. They would contribute, more than any scheme within the compass of human policy, to keep the colonies



lonies in a state of subjection to the mother-country<sup>b</sup>.

I am, &c.

<sup>b</sup> The substance of this letter was shewn, in October 1777, to a principal American agent in PARIS, who said, that the system was too liberal to be adopted by Great Britain.

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LETTER



## LETTER III.

To R—— W——, Esq; London.

Paris, the 13th Nov. 1777.

**I** SINCERELY lament the restraint which the present conjuncture of the affairs of America and Europe imposes on our correspondence. On the subject of politics, which I know to be the favourite theme of my friend, I must write with caution and reserve. The affairs of America, I have good reason to believe, are at present the grand object of deliberation in some of the leading cabinets of Europe, however they may endeavour to throw a veil over their proceedings by specious pretexts. I venture to write my sentiments, for the present, with some degree of freedom, because this letter will be sent by a private, safe, and unsuspected hand.

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THE hostile sentiments of F——e to Great Britain, she will not, if I am not greatly deceived, much longer conceal. The antient rival of England has long been meditating the reduction of British power. Her preparations are now in great forwardness. She will soon commence hostilities against the English settlements both in the east and west: but the storm will fall first upon the east; for, in that part of the world, the wise policy of France expects the surest success. —I hope the epithet I have bestowed on the policy of a neighbouring and powerful kingdom, will not be offensive to a mind so candid and liberal as that of my friend.

IT is not magnanimity, but madness, to undervalue the capacity of an enemy. A just estimate alone, of the power you are called to oppose, will enable you to oppose it with success.—In truth, the administration of the kingdom to which I allude, make politics a science, in which  
every



every man must be a proficient, who expects to rise to preferment in the state. Here statesmen serve, as it were, a regular apprenticeship; for not one man, of however high birth or fortune, is preferred to an important political station, without having previously given proofs of ability to fill it with propriety, in some subordinate station. The power of the cabinet of France, to call to public offices all the genius and capacity of the kingdom, is one advantage manifestly arising from what is, in most respects, a great evil; I mean, an absolute government: whereas in Britain—a country blessed with a free constitution—powerful family-connexions; great wealth, which creates dependents; and the capricious voice of the multitude, sometimes push forward the stupid, the ignorant, the vain, into the highest offices. Hence the political exertions of France are constant and refined; while those of England, though frequently powerful, are yet often desultory, and made, as it were, at random.—



But the great advantage that an absolute has over a free government, lies in the secrecy and expedition of all its operations.—Curse on the *Courier de l'Europe*. That paper has done, does, and will continue to do more hurt to Britain, than a person residing in London can conceive, perhaps more than than could be done by fifty thousand troops.—It was the patriotic speeches in the British parliament, circulated all over Europe, by the *Courier de l'Europe*, that invited and encouraged the enemies of Britain to join their aid to the American rebellion. The Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Shelburne, Mr. Fox, Col. Barré, with other patriots, are constantly exposing the weakness of the British army and navy, and even representing them as much weaker than they in reality are. They give melancholy pictures of the decayed trade and agriculture of England; aggravate the discontents and divisions of its inhabitants; and, on the whole, give such a description



description of the situation of their country, as forebodes nothing less than national misery and ruin. What is this, but to hollow in the ears of the enemies of Britain—Now is your time to effect our downfall?

As the French are led, by the declamations of Minority, to form erroneous opinions concerning the strength of Britain; so the British, without the excuse of a similar cause of deception, and merely from inveterate antipathy and vulgar prejudice, entertain false notions of the difficulties they have to encounter in a contest with France. — Among these difficulties, I reckon the virtues of the present French monarch: who is not that weak person he is generally represented to be; but a judicious, humane, and just prince, who is not attached to any object that can withdraw his attention from the affairs of state so much as for an hour. His views are invariably directed to the happiness of his people; which  
he



he is solicitous to promote by the most effectual means, however opposite they may be, in some instances, to the prejudices and maxims of the French nation. In the choice of his ministers, he is guided solely by a regard to their capacity, knowledge, and probity; regardless of rank, family, interest, or religion. He has removed from the police of Paris, into the marine department, the ablest minister and most active genius of Europe, I mean M. de Sartine; from whose abilities, information, and perseverance, our nation has every thing to fear; as his department extends not only to the establishment of a formidable marine, but also to the colonies in the East and West Indies.

COUNT de Maurepas, the chancellor or prime minister, is rendered too infirm by age to execute his high office with activity; but he does it with precision and integrity. He gave the strongest proof of his patriotic virtue in recommending for his assistant, as director ge-



neral of the finances, a foreigner, a protestant, and a *merchant*, in Mr. Neckar: all of which characters were inconsistent with the established maxims of the French government, and the ideas that were entertained that a prime minister of France must indispensably be a person of the highest rank and family. The mind of Lewis the XVIth was congenial with that of his minister. He burst the bands of bigotry and national pride, over-ruled the prejudices, and studied only the good of his people. What has not England to dread from the ambition of a rival nation, governed by such a king?—From a king, the transition is natural to the representative of a king: let me therefore now pass on to the British Ambassador at this court. He is not popular with the English and French, because he does not misapply his time in entertainments and dissipation; and seems not to consider it as any essential part of the duty of an ambassador, to distinguish himself by a splendor of equipage. The Americans



icans speak of him with a founess which shews how much they dread his talents and virtues \*. The views and arts of the Americans have been counteracted at the court of Versailles by the penetration and

\* This was conspicuous on a particular occasion, wherein Dr. Franklin and his adherents shewed their disappointment, by the eagerness with which they published the correspondence between Lord Stormont and him in 1777, concerning *prisoners*. Had the *British ambassador* condescended to correspond, in that capacity, with the *American agent*, the court of Versailles would have shewn equal eagerness in recognizing the *agent* in his public character, and have left the court of Britain without any cause of complaint, even if the king of France had acknowledged the independency of America; the English ambassador having tacitly acknowledged Dr. Franklin as the *agent* of America, as an independent state:—and by the same arguments, the partizans of America would have had a new and most powerful ground for censuring both the administration of Britain, and the conduct of its ambassador in France.



vigilance of Lord Stormont, with greater success than they could have been perhaps by any other nobleman in Britain. His manner and address in the common intercourses of life, are in the highest degree polite and courtly: but his deportment, when he appears in his official character, is divested of all softness, and marked by a rigid inflexibility, and even a commanding sternness, which confounds the subtle courtiers of this country, and renders all their attempts to amuse abortive. They say here, that it is evident my Lord Stormont was formed for public business at the courts of *Germany*. Unpopular as Lord Stormont generally is in this city, he is universally respected on account of his political knowledge and his learning. It is a singular spectacle to behold an ambassador devoting his vacant

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cant hours to the study of Roman and even Greek literature.—Lord Stormont is remarkably attentive to every matter which concerns individuals of his nation: so that in all respects he discharges the duties of his office; from which, in all probability, he will soon be released. He has the sole merit of warding off the combination of France with America so long, and of course, the influence which such a combination would naturally have on Spain, and perhaps other powers.

THE city of Paris, and the customs and manners of the French nation, have been described by thousands of writers, and still continue to be the subject of endless scribbling. It would therefore be, doubtless, a work of supererogation to lead you over so familiar ground. Yet as the numberless accounts which are given of Paris and its inhabitants, are in some instances contradictory to each other, you may be at a loss to determine



to which you ought to give credit. I have rode round the city of Paris on purpose to compare its extent with that of London; and I think it covers a space not exceeding two third parts of that which is occupied by the British metropolis. But the height of the houses, and the number of families, of the middling and inferior classes, which severally inhabit each floor; and above all, the multitudes that are crowded together in the 4th, 5th, and 6th stories, do certainly prove beyond a contradiction, that the city of Paris contains a much larger number of people than London, where whole houses, on an average, are occupied by five or six persons. Here we ought also to observe, that in London many thousands of houses are untenanted, a thing which is seldom found in Paris. House-rent, all over France, and the common necessaries of life, are amazingly cheap; the poverty of the lower people makes them œconomists; the habit of œconomy produces



produces contentment, and contentment is happiness.

I KNOW not whether it has been generally remarked by travellers, that in France persons of the first condition, possessing titles, high honorary orders, and offices, are not ashamed to observe a parsimony, which an English gentleman of very humble fortune, would very absurdly blush to imitate. Paris is a place where a man of fashion may, with credit and comfort, live just in proportion to his income. You may live in the politest circles with a fortune of only 200 louis d'ors a year. I have often dined in a house called a *Restaurateur*, where I have chosen two or three favourite articles, out of a list half a yard in length, and had my choice of a dozen different wines. My whole repast cost only about eighteen pence: at the same time I have seen persons of high rank, and dressed for court, dine for little more than the half of my extravagance. Your table,

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napkins,



napkins, plates, and covers, are clean and neat: you are not disturbed either with noise or impertinence, but on the contrary, attended to by those who sit near you, with civility and with respect. From the *Restaurateur*, I will just step in, for a little, to the coffee-house. It is easy to perceive from the conversation of the French, that they are not disposed to forget their discomfiture in the last war, nor the capture of their ships by the English before any declaration of hostilities. The American war is the great topic of discourse. Certainly, the countenance that is afforded in France to the American cause, tends to diminish that reverence for crowned heads, that veneration for the *grand monarque*, which forms a very essential principle in the French constitution. The cause of national and political liberty is now as freely discussed in all coffee-houses and societies in Paris, as it is in the British senate, or at any coffee-house or minority-association in England. The French government



government connives at this freedom, without recollecting the well-known proverbial saying, *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur*. The word of the day is *Delenda est Carthago*.

THUS much for politics.—You will no doubt expect that I should explain the reason why I am now at Paris, instead of sailing down the Red-sea, or thence to the coast of India. The fact is, that when I came to this city, I found that the passage by the Arabian gulf was not to be thought of, on account of the opposing monsoon, until the ensuing season. I was at the same time confidently assured, that a ship would sail from *L'Orient* in the month of September, by taking a passage in which, I might gain five months besides other advantages which might assist my investigations, the object of which I have already hinted to you in a former letter. But I was amused by the *armateurs*, or *ships-husbands*, from time to



to time, and it was but a few days ago that I got matters finally settled with them. I shall leave Paris the day after to-morrow. The true cause of delaying the East India ships of this kingdom beyond the time first fixed for their sailing, is the uncertainty of peace or war, and the expedition fitting out for India from Brest, consisting of seven sail of the line and 4000 regular troops, under the command of Count D'Estaing. My mind is filled with melancholy presages concerning the object of this armament: I am alarmed on my own account as well as on that of my country.

LETTER



LETTER IV.

Mr. P——, in L'Orient.

Hennebon, January 1, 1778.

I HAVE received the favour of your letter, and I thank you for having taken the trouble to give orders about my trunk. This will be delivered to you by my servant, who will bring hither such letters as may have come to your hands this morning. I have punctually obeyed your last injunction, but my servant has forgot to bring the mineral water.

You, Sir, are one of the few persons from whom I have received civilities since I came to L'Orient; and you may believe that I feel your goodness the more sensibly on that account. I have lately got a hint, which I confess did  
not



not wholly surprize me ; I was prepared for it by unhandfome treatment on the very first hour of my arrival in L'Orient.—A treatment to which I never in my life had been accustomed, very naturally led me to suspect that something was going forward which could not well bear the light. My curiosity was excited by that suspicious caution and coolness, of which I found myself the object in the company of men whom I had never offended, and to whom I could be obnoxious only because I was a British subject.—I do most heartily despise the idea of suspicion ; but I will never abandon that affection and loyalty which I owe to my country and prince, unless by unavoidable circumstances I shall become the adopted subject of a foreign state.

THIS nation is yet on terms of amity with that to which I belong. While I sojourn here, expending my fortune, I am entitled to common civility : but if, instead of the well-known polite-  
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ness of France, I meet with nothing but indignities and outrage, I am not to learn that the wise policy of civilized nations has provided an establishment, whose sacred function is to procure for their subjects residing in foreign nations, redress of past grievances, and security against future. To this establishment I confess I have been, while in L'Orient for the first time in my life, obliged to resort; and this I did, not clandestinely, but in the face of the world.—If in the course of a necessary narrative I have touched upon any matter that may have given offence, that matter was not of my own seeking; it was not the consequence of a prying curiosity; it was obtruded upon me in a very unhandsome and disagreeable manner. As to opinions delivered in the freedom of conversation and social intercourse; for these I hope I need not make any apology. Here I plead the common practice of the country, and especially the practice of *L'Orient*; where surmises suited to the wishes of its inhabitants,



habitants, are industriously propagated as facts; and where a manifest *partiality* sports with unbounded freedom, not only with truth, but with institutions universally deemed essential to the prosperity of political, and inseparable from the existence of commercial societies.—If the letters of individuals (under the solemn seal which all states have sanctified) are not sacred in public offices, the interests of commerce are injured, and national faith shaken, if not destroyed: If any unjustifiable freedom has been taken with my private correspondence, I shall represent it in an open letter to the representative of the sovereign of my nation. Guilty minds alone are fearful. Even without the protection of the British ambassador, I should not apprehend any injustice in France. I would confidently look for justice, and easily obtain it. The police of this nation is excellent, and is impartially exercised in favour of all who know how to avail themselves of it, whatever be their country, or their rank



rank in life. Nevertheless, I can clearly perceive that individuals in this province are guilty of manifold acts of injustice to my country. These men are, in my humble opinion, enemies to the prosperity of France, England, and America, as well as to the general tranquillity of Europe. From the origin of the present unhappy contest, I easily foresaw the evils which were likely to arise from wrong information and political faction. I wished for an honourable, liberal, and constitutional accommodation between the branches of the same trunk, the subjects of the same crown, possessing the same civil and religious principles, the mutual support of each other; but whose public prosperity and private happiness, unfortunately for both, have excited the envy of other nations. My conduct has uniformly been agreeable to these sentiments; sentiments in a British subject, which I am persuaded would find approbation even in the court of *Versailles*. I hope I am a good citizen of the world; but



but at the same time, I profess what I feel, a most cordial predilection for my native country. I have often, Sir, had occasion to admire your prudent caution with regard to public affairs: for whether in complaisance to your guest, or from whatever other cause, your reserve on political subjects in my company, has hitherto made it a question with me, to which side your wishes incline: neither have I ever endeavoured to discover them. My sentiments I have never concealed, and I hope I need not be ashamed to avow them. It becomes a British subject to hold in abhorrence the conduct of such persons as clandestinely furnish the means of protracting an unnatural and inhuman rebellion, which depopulates other countries without enriching their own, and which may in its consequences be productive of the most serious evils to all Europe.

If your civilities to a stranger are construed illiberally by contracted minds, I shall



I shall deeply regret my want of resolution to resist the polite invitation of M. and Madame P——, of whose goodness I shall retain a lively sense as long as I live.

With these sentiments, Sir, I give you leave to exhibit them wherever and on whatever occasion you may think proper.

I have the honour, &c.



## LETTER V.

To R—— W——, Esq.

Nantz, 3d January, 1778.

THE prohibition is withdrawn, and private ships are permitted to take out the usual documents (what we call clearances) for India. I have fixed upon my cabin, and prepared the proper accommodations for sea. The ship is ready, and we are eager to embrace the first fair wind to depart; yet, having previously consulted the *armateur*, I determined to hazard a journey to *Rennes*, which is the capital of *Bretagne*, in order to meet a gentleman from *Bordeaux*, to whom I am to commit the custody of my last letters to Great-Britain; and I have chosen, at the expence of twenty miles extraordinary, to take this great commercial city in my way.

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IN my excursions through various countries, I have for the first time been treated with incivility at *L'Orient*, in the kingdom of France, where, of all parts of the world, incivility was least to have been expected. But the airy genius of France, in the full career of politeness, is not inattentive to the dictates of political wisdom.

L'ORIENT, Nantz, and Dunkirk, of all the ports of France, are the most distinguished for an attachment to the American cause, and a zealous opposition to that of Britain. The people of the American frigates (the *Raleigh* and *Alfred*) that sailed lately from L'Orient, knew me, and could not be persuaded that the place of my destination was India. They gave such an account of me to their agents, that I soon became an object of suspicion, and all my motions were watched with the strictest vigilance.

ON the 15th of November I obtained his most Christian Majesty's mandamus,



countersigned by his minister of state the Count de Vergennes, for permission "*To pass freely and without molestation to L'Orient, in order that I might there embark for India.*"

After my arrival at L'Orient, M. L'Avayssé, a merchant, for whom I had left a letter, called upon me, and we walked together into the port. He asked if I had been to wait on the principal officers? I answered, that I had not; and at the same time made an apology for this part of my conduct. M. L'A——e said, we are now near the house of the Commissary of marine, and it will be proper to call upon him. I replied, with all my heart, if the time be not unreasonable. We entered, the Commissary was invisible, and we left our names. Next morning, accompanied by M. A——r——d, who was also a merchant of L'Orient, and a French gentleman, M. Boutet, captain of a ship, I waited a second time on the Commissary, who received us in his office. On my being presented to him as an English gentleman going to India by the first ship, he asked, with great rudeness, if that  
was



was the Englishman that had walked into the port yesterday, and was suspected of not having had any introduction to any person in the place? M. A——r——d then set the Commissary right, with regard to this matter, very distinctly. The Commissary next asked, if Monsieur had a permission to embark? He was answered in the affirmative, and the King's mandamus was laid before him, countersigned by the Count de Vergennes. The manner in which the Commissary had received me, ceased to amaze me, when I beheld the contempt with which he treated his royal master's signature. "If Monsieur," said he, "has no other permission, I shall not suffer him to embark in any ship from L'Orient." We took leave of this *menu officier*, and waited on M. de la Vigne, the commandant of the port, who received me with all the politeness of a French gentleman. I also waited on M. Tremicourt, commandant of the town, who received me with great politeness. After all these ceremonies were over, M. A——r——d, with his usual



goodness, undertook to write to his brother-in-law, Mr. Vincent, of Paris, to solicit a passport for me from M. de Sartine. I judged it prudent to second Mr. Vincent's application, which I did by writing an exact state of my case to the Lord Viscount Stormont, at that time the English ambassador at the court of Versailles. This step I thought absolutely necessary: for I had been represented by the Americans, as a member of the legislature of Grenada, as a principal officer of his Britannick Majesty's customs, and on the whole, as a person who could not in truth be bound for India. In the mean time, Mr. Vincent's application to the justice of M. de Sartine, was alone sufficient for my purpose. I obtained, without difficulty, the desired passport.

In my letter to Lord Stormont, which wore the complexion of a complaint, I took care to intermix with the detail I gave his Lordship, but in an indirect manner, several particulars which it was  
of



of more importance to my nation than his Lordship should know, than the difficulties I had to encounter before I should be permitted to embark at L'Orient. I gave his Lordship an idea of the under-hand work that was going forward in that port, and an account of the military stores that were put on board of ships bound for America. Whether these hints were thought sufficient grounds for any enquiry on the part of Lord Stormont, or whether that vigilant and able minister had not been apprized of the circumstances I thought it my duty to communicate before I took the liberty of writing to him, I do not know: but this I know, that from the moment the Commissary of marine was informed, that I had wrote to the British ambaffador, he became more particular than ever in his enquiries concerning me, my destination, connexions, &c. infomuch, that some of my friends at L'Orient began to be uneasy about my safety. I was at that time at Hennebon, for the sake of air and health; and being



apprehensive that the jealousy and resentment of the Commissary might attempt some mischief against the gentleman with whom I lived, I judged it proper to communicate to him what I had heard, of the suspicions that were entertained of me; and at the same time, by a declaration of his innocence, which was founded in the strictest truth, to vindicate his character from any aspersions that might be thrown upon it on my account. A copy of this letter, which I here inclose, will give you an idea of my conduct on that occasion. You will think it, perhaps, rather bold; but in all probability it has been the means of preserving me from the greatest insults, the general consequences, in situations similar to mine, of betraying any symptoms of apprehension. Even now, I am not, after all that has passed, certain that I shall be permitted to pursue my voyage to India from this country. I found this doubt on the probability that the court of Versailles will soon come to an open rupture with that of London: and this probability I infer



I infer from facts, from declarations, from general appearances, and from my intercourse with persons of this nation, as well as the agents of America.

THE East-India expedition is suspended only for a season. The force that was destined to attack the English settlements in the East, will be sent, in the first place, to support the Americans. Eleven vessels are now loaded, and have probably sailed from L'Orient and Nantz for Boston, having on board heavy artillery, ammunition, cloathing, salt, and provisions. The American ships were conducted, with the greatest secrecy, by a French frigate, until they were clear of the bay of Biscay.

THE treaty on foot between Mr. Franklin and the court of France, is for an alliance offensive and defensive. On the one hand it is proposed, that France shall support the independence of North America; and on the other, that America shall yield up to France the exclusive trade of  
the



the southern provinces, the Carolinas, Virginia, and Maryland. I have learned still farther, by a frigate which arrived at L'Orient on the 17th of last month from Pondicherry and L'Isle de France, that a treaty has been concluded between a Monsieur St. Lubin on the part of France, and the celebrated Hyder Ally Cawn, the powerful and inveterate enemy of the Nabob of Arcot and the English. The object of this confederacy is the invasion of the Carnatic, the emancipation of the Rajah of Tanjore, and the re-establishment in Asia of the commerce and influence of France. The French mean to send out this season only three hundred recruits in private ships, to carry besides coals, stores, and ammunition: and all this is only preparatory to the grand operations of the ensuing year, which will be conducted by General Bellecombe and the Count D'Estaing. A very fine frigate, called *La Sartine*, in compliment to the minister of the marine department, who is the soul of the cabinet, and the grand projector of all schemes



schemes in this nation, sailed from Bourdeaux about twelve or fifteen months ago, filled with great and small arms, ammunition, and other stores, cloathing, and some merchandize, under the direction of Monsieur de St. Lubin, who has been on the Malabar coast, and succeeded in the principal object of his mission.

As the port and town of L'Orient have an exclusive right to receive all imports eastward of the Cape of Good Hope, on condition of paying five per cent. indult on the gross sale (which is made in the King's warehouses) besides the usual duties; so they have not hitherto participated in the trade of the West. But as there is not any express stipulation *against* the western imports, they are now endeavouring to engage the Americans to trade chiefly with them; and their endeavours are likely to prove successful.

THE merchants of Nantz, (which enjoys a communication with the beautiful  
river



river Loire, which falls into the ocean near the bottom of the bay of Biscay, and which is navigable, as well as many of its branches, even to the interior parts of the kingdom) behold the rivalry of L'Orient with evident symptoms of jealousy and discontent.—It is remarkable, that the city of Nantz has always been the most forward in France, to enter into and support measures hostile to Britain. In the year 1744, the merchants of Nantz were the engine which moved the deluded Pretender to urge his rash claim to the throne of Great Britain; they furnished him with arms, ammunition, money, and shipping for the purpose of transporting him and his adherents to Scotland; and entered into a most enlarged plan, in order to favour his views. They have, in like manner, been uncommonly zealous and active in supporting the pretensions of the Americans, and in supplying all their wants.

THE city of Nantz is large, healthy, populous, commodious in the highest degree



gree for commerce, as we have already observed, and remarkably pleasant by means of the Loire. Ships of any mercantile burthen, and in any numbers, can enter the river, and come up to the city. I conceive the navigation of the Loire to be perfectly secure for about thirty miles; nor is it defended, as far as I can learn, any more than the city of Nantz, by any regular fortifications.

L'ORIENT is not only strongly defended by the fortrefs of port Lewis, at the entrance of the harbour, and by several batteries on the opposite point, but also by others which protect the inner harbour; besides that the city itself is a regular fortification. The houses of L'Orient, its streets, and the appearance of its inhabitants, who, notwithstanding its small compass, are said to amount to 20,000 souls, exhibit a most striking proof of the mighty advantages of commerce. Indeed, I have constantly been able to judge of the excellence or defects of any civil constitution,



as well as of the virtue or corruption of those in power, in any country, by the first appearance of the people, the streets, and the houses.

THIS will in all probability, be the last letter you will receive from me in Europe. As I am certain that your kindest wishes accompany me, so you may be assured that my heart makes a suitable return of the warmest affection for you, and that I shall rejoice in every account that informs me of your happiness.

Adieu.

LETTER



LETTER VI.

The Right Honourable Lord N—h.

At Sea, 12th May, 1778;

by the way of *St. Helena*.

MY LORD,

VARIOUS circumstances have concurred to furnish me with means of information concerning the political interests of Britain, as well as the views of other nations, her secret enemies. I have the satisfaction of being persuaded, that last winter, I communicated to the ambassador at Paris, some hints which were of public importance. I also endeavoured, through indirect channels, to convey others to administration at home. I was then waiting for a passage to India at L'Orient, where, as well as at neighbouring ports, I discovered transactions, inimical in the highest degree to England, which I thought it my duty to lay before government.



ment. Among other things, I mentioned a piece of *secret* intelligence, which was brought in December last to L'Orient, from the Isle of France, by a frigate of war, the *Consolante*. It was, that the Chevalier St. Lubin had concluded a treaty with Hyder Ally Cawn, to which the Rajah of Tanjore had acceded. The reasons which incline me to give credit to this report, will not, perhaps, be thought light or trifling by your Lordship.

I AM enabled, by chance, to explain to your Lordship, the mysterious character and situation of M. St. Lubin; and for this I am indebted to a fellow-passenger, who formerly held an office of trust in the civil service of the late French East-India Company, and since, in that of the crown; a man of character, who has good prospects, and possesses the best means of information.

M. ST. LUBIN is a person without any visible fortune, who, by a long unsettled residence



residence in India, has acquired an uncommon knowledge of the customs, manners, policy, trade, languages, situations, and dispositions of the several powers of that country, both native and European. From the station of a private soldier in Mauritius, by genius, activity, address, fluency of speech, and withal a considerable share of assurance, he has risen to his present eminence. He ingratiated himself very much with some of the directors of the late East India Company; and since the suspension of their charter, he has acquired the favour and confidence of M. de Sartine in so high a degree, that if his abilities had not been thought more usefully employed in a walk of life not so public, he would have been appointed to the government of Pondicherry: this would have afforded a surprising spectacle to the governor of the Isle of France, who a few years ago treated M. St. Lubin in a very disgraceful manner, on suspicion of his being too much in the confidence of the English. He has lately been dignified



with a military order, and is now invested with the sole direction of two large trading ships on the coast of Malabar, where his address, his knowledge, and his ready access to Hyder Ally and the Maratta tribes, are very likely to attain the object of his employers, the re-establishment of their trade, and the resumption of their charter. The political system relative to India, of the Duke of Choiseul, is apparently the present system of France, as well as of Britain: it is intended to reserve the territorial property in the hands of the crown; at the same time to give every possible encouragement to the Company as *merchants*, in a line suited to their education, profession, and capacity.

MONSIEUR de Sartine is, doubtless, the most subtle, temporizing, and active politician in the French administration, and promises to procure stability in one department of state or other. After the example of the Duke of Choiseul, he discovers the first *mercantile geniuses* in the  
 2 city



city of Paris, and avails himself of their ability and experience. He is now concerting with them measures, as conducive to the interests of his own nation, as they are subversive of those of Britain. Your Lordship's judgment, informed by an intercourse with persons acquainted with the local and political circumstances of Hindostan, will direct the measures most likely to counteract the machinations of M. de Sartine, and to frustrate the views of a state extremely ambitious of the trade of India, and jealous of the influence which Great Britain has established in that quarter of the world. But here your Lordship has many obstacles to encounter, in the unabating resentment of Hyder Ally Cawn, who conceives the power of Britain to be the only obstruction in his career to absolute dominion in the DECAN; and the awakened ambition of a nominal king<sup>a</sup> bearing royalty in fetters, and mortified by the humiliating condition to

<sup>a</sup> Rajah of Tanjore.



which he is reduced, but who had hitherto wanted resolution to reject the unworthy terms on which he held his sovereignty, or so much as to avow a wish for his emancipation.

YOUR Lordship will also be led to consider how far it is consistent with sound policy to secure, without extending, the territorial acquisitions of Britain in Hindostan; and how necessary it is to counterbalance the influence of ambitious rivals, who will, no doubt, be industrious to alienate the affections of the natives from the English, and to shake their confidence in British faith. It will farther become an object of political consideration, whether it will be wisdom to commit the chief *native* power, into the hands of *one* mild, just, and firm prince, in whose friendship and gratitude you may safely confide; or, by dividing the power of the *Carnatic*<sup>b</sup> among various petty pretenders to sovereignty, to render them all equally

<sup>b</sup> This alludes only to the Carnatic of the kingdom of Tanjore.

ambitious,



ambitious, jealous, and dependent; dupes to the artifices of divers European agents, who will flatter each of them with promises of protection and uncontrolled dominion.

THIS, my Lord, is a question, the solution of which will diffuse its influence to the Ganges, Guzarat, and Malabar: and in order to solve it, it will be necessary previously to make the following inquiries.

1st. Have the nation and company, conjunctly or separately, experienced honour, fidelity, and friendship in any of the Asiatic princes? 2d. Have they had cause to suspect any prince in Asia of treachery? 3d. Have the English nation and company adhered inviolably to *their* engagements with Eastern princes? 4th. Have the Company, or their agents, committed actions which may have loosened the bands of friendship, destroyed the confidence of the *princes* of the EAST, and withdrawn the affections of the people?

5th. Can any future act of the Company



regain and secure the confidence of Asiatic princes, and the affections of their subjects? 6th. Is the faith of government (considered as distinct from the company) yet entire in the East? 7th. May not the interference of government, by a rigid administration of justice, restore the influence of the English name, and re-establish the Company in the confidence and esteem of the princes and people of Hindostan? 8th. Have not the Europeans greater reason to expect the benefits of commerce, justice, and protection, from a just, mild, and humane prince, than from an usurper, political, bold, and ambitious; but ignorant of the laws, and a stranger to the sweets of commerce?—for, let it be seriously considered, that the whole government of the DECAN must fall into the hands of Hyder Ally Cawn, if it is wrested on the coast of Coromandel from the legal sovereign of the Carnatic.—9th. Are not the territorial revenues in India, together with other manifold advantages resulting therefrom to the English nation, capable,



capable, under prudent management, of contributing largely to the extinction of the national debt? — It would be sufficient that it should reduce it to that *quantum* which, by dividing a reasonable interest, and securing public credit, would add strength to the nation, by attaching rich individuals to government, and by inviting them to commit their fortunes into the public funds.

THE present, my Lord, is a period big with important events in the two extremes of the globe. Hitherto the power of arms which acquired, hath also secured European influence in Asia. But the natives being now instructed in the use of arms and the art of war, a permanent influence among them is to be expected only from a mild and wise system of politics, founded like the original institutions of India, on virtue and justice<sup>c</sup>. The tyrannical system esta-

<sup>c</sup> The Indians have now become less virtuous than they were formerly, from their intercourse with Europeans, who forced them to practise the arts of deceit for their own preservation.



blished in Asia by adventurers from that division of the world which is falsely considered as being the farthest advanced in refinement and humanity, must be exploded; a spirit of commercial liberty must succeed, whose mild and beneficial influence will gradually banish all ideas of despotism from European breasts, and dispel of course that melancholy distrust and apprehension, which unfortunately have so long hung over the minds of the gentle natives of the East.—There is not in the world a people *naturally* more virtuous, more tractable and docile, or capable of arriving at greater perfection in those arts which give elasticity to the springs of commerce, than those over whom the English East India Company have extended their dominion in Asia.

Pardon, my Lord, this digression—this Letter will, in all probability, release your Lordship from the intrusions of a speculative correspondent, whose talents bear no proportion to his love of his country,  
but



but who nevertheless wishes to contribute his mite to its aggrandizement, by laying these ideas before the British minister.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER



## LETTER VII,

To J—— T——, Esq; London.

At Sea, May 17, 1778.

lat.  $27^{\circ}$  S. long.  $15^{\circ}$  W. from Paris.

I HAVE already taken an opportunity of sending you two letters by the Queen, bound for *St. Helena*. A favourable wind has continued that ship in our company longer than we expected, and has enabled me to add a third. On re-perusing the copy of a letter which I sent under your cover to Lord N——, I have discovered the omission of several material circumstances, tending to create strong suspicions of the hostile views of France in Asia, which, if they should prove successful, would be fatal to the English East India Company, detrimental to the British nation, and ruinous to their firm and faithful friend and ally, the Nabob of the Carnatic. The *Sartine* of 800 tons, mounting

ing



ing 30 guns, is more elegant, and has more accommodations than any ship belonging to France. In this vessel M. St. Lubin frequently entertains Hyder Ally, the principal Maratta chiefs, and other Malabar princes, in state; exhibiting on those occasions, the several colours of the Maratta and India nations, provided for this purpose in the city of *Bourdeaux*. The Chevalier carried out some merchandise with him, as well to serve for a blind, as to supply immediate necessaries. The bulk of his lading consists in arms and ammunition of all kinds, proper both for fortifications and the field. He is so much in the good graces of Hyder, that the French flag is often displayed by that prince over the walls of *Mangalore*, his principal fortress. The masters of the ships under the direction of St. Lubin, have orders to pay implicit obedience to all his commands. They are perfectly unacquainted with his plans and purposes. In the mean time, they are impatient



patient of their inactivity, which disappoints their views of private trade.

It is said, that St. Lubin, on some public occasions, bears marks of high distinction, even a red ribband.—I commit these additional facts to your discretion, if they shall appear as important to you as they do to me, you will communicate them.

I remain as usual, &c. &c.

LETTER



LETTER VIII.

To

At Sea, in the ship *Briffon*, 3 June 1778.

THE last letter which I had the honour to address to my fair friend, was dated at Madeira, the 15th March, the day on which I re-embarked to pursue my voyage to India. In that letter, I gave you an account of the severe illness under which I laboured, when in the Bay of Biscay, for the space of nineteen days, without any very sensible intermission; of the happy and rapid effect of the air of Madeira on my health; of that hospitality, for which the British merchants in that island are eminently distinguished; of the kind and unremitting attention of captain *Chezeaux* of the *Briffon*; and of the goodness of my honest



honest fellow-passenger, the reverend Mr. Y——e:

CONTRARY winds, continued calms, and cross currents, have made our passage from the day of re-embarkation at Madeira to this moment, very long and tedious. We are now standing for the Cape of Good Hope, which may be reckoned more than half, and less than two-thirds, of the outward passage to India: a computation which is reversed in the homeward passage, on account of that circuit which the trade-winds render as necessary in the eastern as in the western seas within the tropics. —As we are likely soon to have a week's refreshment among the Mynheers and Hottentots, I shall occasionally drink a glass of pure *Constantia* to the health of my absent friends.

OUR passage has not hitherto produced any occurrences that could yield amusement to my fair relation: if it had, I should have felt a very sensible pleasure  
in



in reciting them. Our ship is easy; but rather a slow than a fast sailer. Whether it be, that her dimensions between decks have been suited to the size of the people of the country to which she belongs, or whether it be the effect of a ridiculous parsimony, there is not in the ship a cabin which is not too low for my moderate stature by some inches: so that I cannot stand or walk upright, am deprived of useful exercise, and in constant danger of breaking my head or my neck.—In the midst of the inconveniencies attending this *depressed* state of existence, I find some alleviation of my sufferings, in the assiduous kindness of the captain, who labours incessantly to make the passage comfortable. He has, naturally, a good and feeling heart, and I am persuaded, is a man of untainted probity and honour. His principal officers, following the example of their captain, honour me with marks of distinguished respect; for which civilities, I am indebted,  
ed,



ed, no doubt, to the ship's owners and *Armateurs*, my friends Messrs. A——d and V——t. All the officers on board appear to me to be good and skilful seamen. Instead of the spacious apartment that was fitted up for me at L'Orient, I enjoy the council-chamber alone, where a very handsome and commodious cott is suspended for me, in which I enjoy at night pure air ; so that I have occasion to use my original cabbin only for the purposes of writing and dressing. In such circumstances, I ought not to murmur at little subjects of discontent ; but on the contrary, chearfully to comply with the customs and habits of so kind a people.—But it must be allowed, the provisions, which are abundantly plentiful, are not of the best quality ; the cookery too is very bad ; but the bread, pastry, and vermicelli soup, are excellent. The poultry are so old, that hungry bull-dogs would find it a labour to tear the fowls in pieces. The hams are rotten :



the salted beef old and hard, and every thing proper for human food, boiled to rags, and covered with nastiness. What heterogeneous and nauseous compounds of pork, beef, geese, ducks, fowls, tripe, fish, bread, cabbage, onions, grease, &c.! These ingredients are boiled up together into a mixture, to which they give the name of soup. Their ragouts and sauces are made up of oil, vinegar, and garlic. Sometimes a roasted duck or a lean mutton chop, rescued from a load of nauseous sauces, is presented in compliment to me and Mr. Y—e. But omlets of not very fresh eggs (for they have been on board now five months) have been my chief subsistence since I left *Madeira*. The captain, Mr. Y—e, and I breakfast and sup apart in the round-house. We dine in the *grande chambre*, with the six senior officers, the surgeon, capuchin friar as chaplain, two more passengers, and the midshipmen in rotation. I have not expended a bottle of the ship's li-

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quor since I came on board, having my own claret, madeira, and old brandy, each of the best quality. — To many things very disagreeable to me, the French are reconciled by habit: nor do I reproach that people with what custom has rendered familiar to them, and even pleasant; but were I to undertake another voyage from France, my present experience would teach me how to make it very comfortable; provided that I could find a second Captain *de Cheseaux*, who, at the same time that he treats every individual committed to his charge as master of the *Briffon*, with the greatest humanity and tenderness, is scrupulously just, and attentive to the interests of his employers, and the success of the voyage. Habit, which reconciles a French taste to the most nauseous viands, and which works so many other miracles, has made the pen very familiar to my fingers, and rendered scribbling the darling amusement of my sedentary life. It yields that  
solitary



solitary kind of dissipation which is, at this time, the best suited both to my situation and disposition; and which, by contributing to dispel some impending clouds of sorrow, consoles and brightens up the mind. I frequently make excursions into the ample field of politics. On this subject, I have taken the liberty to transmit some ideas to the ablest statesmen in Britain: the ostensible minister, but who, in too many instances, does not *direct*, but *obey*.

I DOUBT not but our ship's company may, from my constant reading and writing, like the people of L'Orient, think me a person of great importance. They may silently conjecture what matters are produced by all these writings. But on all these subjects I am reserved, not only with them, but even with my companion, Mr. Y—e; who, by the way, will never disturb me by any impertinent enquiries, for he has not a



grain of political curiosity in his constitution. I now and then say, that this is a fortunate disposition; it enables a man to kill time, and easily reconciles him to confinement.—*A propos*, Captain de Cheseaux has a small but well-chosen library: I have read it all over. Among other books, I found three quarto volumes of the marine ordinances of France, the works of Abbe Raynal, Voltaire, Rousseau, Vertot, and Marmontel. — Another thing comfortable in our little society, is, that without violating *official* distance, and that reserve which is naturally imposed by superiority of station, the officers are polite, easy, and happily united with one another in great intimacy and friendship; into which the captain enters with a familiarity which conciliates their affection, without diminishing their respect.

THAT you may not have any excuse for writing short letters, I shall make  
little



little difficulty in demanding full answers to the queries which you will find subjoined to this. The letters I wrote to you before my departure from Port Lewis, those from Madeira, and the length of the present, give me an undoubted claim as a creditor, exclusively of the pretensions of affinity and friendship. I was just going to conclude my letter ; but I will strengthen my claim as a creditor, by making it yet a little longer. — Remember, my fair cousin, one of my last injunctions, not to become superstitious or a nun. I know your good sense, and that your mind is not one of the weakest : but the air of a religious mansion is infectious, and the zeal of devotees great, and sometimes wonderfully successful. By way of illustrating the truth of this position, I will tell you the following story, with which, in reality, I shall close this long epistle.



WHEN I was at the town of *Aire*, in Artois, one of the brothers of the English Franciscan convent, an honest jolly Yorkshireman, conducted me to the shop of a Monsieur Collins, to get my watch repaired. I found Mr. Collins a native of London, above fourscore years old, making a hard shift, by mending watches, to support himself and a family, consisting of two strapping daughters. His sight had greatly failed him, as well as all the other means of subsistence and comfort, except his memory, his industry, and his religion. As he was a conversible man, I found not a little entertainment in his company; and particularly, in his relations of many curious anecdotes and various events, which had occurred in the province of *Artois* in the course of above fifty years. At length he introduced his favourite topic, that of religion, which led him to relate the history of his life. Being by profession a clock and watch-maker, and desirous of improving himself



self in the external branch of his art, he went over to Paris, where he resided for a considerable time. On his return home, he became acquainted with some of the English Jesuits of St. Omer, who prevailed on him to sojourn amongst them for some weeks; in which time they converted him from the Protestant to the Romish faith. He thereupon resolved to bid adieu to his native country, took up his abode in that in which he was a stranger, swore fealty to France, and married. His wife is dead. By industry in his profession, and by the small labours of his two daughters, he provides a scanty subsistence for his family; and in the midst of poverty, and under the pressure of years, supports a chearfulness by the strength of religion. After attempting, in vain, to convert me to his religion by words, the good old time-teller got up, and taking a small book from a shelf over his head, desired me to read *that*. It was a small treatise on the disputes between



between Protestants and Papists, composed in the English tongue by the late body of English Jesuits in St. Omer.

Adieu.

LETTER



LETTER IX.

Messrs. A——d \* and Son, of La Rochelle; per the Count D'Artois.

On board the Briffon, approaching the  
coast of Ceylon, 3 August, 1778,

I HAVE been so often deceived by judging charitably of the actions of mankind, that I have almost become a convert to that system of moral philosophy which derives every thing that men do, or say, or feel, from the principle of self-love. I was happy, gentlemen, in expressing to you, on all occasions, the sense I had of the kind treatment I received in my passage on board your ship the Briffon; you will not therefore readily imagine that I would alter my tone without reason. I sincerely lament that I have occasion to

\* Mr. A——d is a sensible and serious man, and a Calvinist.



do so. Concerned for the dignity of human nature, I deeply regret that it is impossible to distinguish dissingenuous professions from marks of real friendship.

On the 5th of July, I had the mortification to discover that the *Brissou* was a prison, and Captain de Cheseaux its vigilant keeper. I found, farther, that the chains of two British subjects had been forged in *L'Orient*. It was not a *stupor*, but the very favourable opinion I had conceived of this keeper, that prevented my feeling the fetters that were imperceptibly fitted to my legs and arms. I approve the political concealment of those illiberal orders to detain me and my fellow-passenger in this prison, at first: but after having lived in the greatest friendship and intimacy for five months, still to attempt to continue the delusion, even when the Cape of *Good-Hope*, and Foul-Point in *Madagascar*, could no longer be held out to deceive us, was not more ungenerous than it was ridiculous. Would

not



not the captain's conduct have been more worthy of praise, if he had frankly expressed a concern, that the instructions of the Commissary *Gonèt*, under the influence of two or three American ship-mates, and other agents at L'Orient, had laid him under an unpleasant injunction? Then his prisoners would have treated *Gonèt* as a pitiful reptile, and thanked the captain for his candour. But we should have thought still more highly of his amiable qualities, if he had suffered us to take exercise, air, and other refreshments, at the *Cape*, along with *all* his people, and his other passengers, as he did at *Madeira*. There is surely a discretionary power lodged with masters of ships, as to the proper and necessary places of refreshment: the health, the lives of the passengers and crews of ships, often depend on the will of the captain, who may either confine them on ship-board, or set them, for a time, on the salutary shore. For my own part, I must say, the rigor of the master of the *Brissón*, was to me very unseasonable: for I had been a valetudinarian during the whole



whole voyage; and lately felt symptoms of the sea-scurvy, which is curable only by land air, and land exercise. My companion, the Rev. Mr. Y——, and myself, beheld all the passengers, officers, and crew, people of all nations, complexions, sects, and languages, refreshing and amusing themselves on the delicious Isle of Bourbon, while we, like two criminals, were confined to the ship; which, by the way, rode at anchor at that very point of view, whence engineers could make their observations with the greatest advantage. But the truth is, there was not room for observations of any importance—a parcel of scattered houses, erected without form or regularity on banks of sand, without any fortifications, or troops to protect them.—It was probably the weakness of *St. Paul's* \*, that was the great object of concealment.

—DURING the time we continued in this situation, which was seven days, we were

\* The capital of the Isle of Bourbon.

exhibited



exhibited as a spectacle to numerous visitants from shore, as if we had been monsters confined in a den, or malefactors in a prison: but it is justice to say, that those visitants brought many refreshments, of which we were in dreadful necessity.

It was some time before I found out our state of captivity; but having discovered our disagreeable situation, I immediately determined to bring M. de Cheseaux to an eclairecissement. As he came on board that evening with some company, to sup and sleep, I asked him, at supper, if the ship was to sail to-morrow, as I had heard she was? Yes.—Do you go on shore to-morrow? Yes.—“Will you have the goodness to order one of your boats to put me on shore?” After a wild stare, which I returned—“I cannot allow *you* to go on shore, and I am surprised that a gentleman of your good sense should ask that liberty.”—“For what reason am I particularly restrained from going on shore, when all my  
my



my fellow-passengers, French, Italians, Jesuits, Indians, and even your *bill of lading* recruits, have had that indulgence?" "Because you are an Englishman."—"Is there a war between England and France?" "No." "Have I committed any capital crime on board?"—"No! Sir, no! but I *did* endeavour to obtain leave for you, and said that you was sick, but it was refused."—"Then I know *now* that I am your prisoner, although you wanted candour to tell me so before. I am refused that privilege in a French colony, which would not have been denied to me in New Zealand or Patagonia." From that moment my captivity sat heavy on me, lengthening each day to the space of a month, and detaching me more and more from my captain, whom I thenceforth began to regard as my gaoler.

BUT perhaps my resentment is without any just foundation. M. de Cheseaux, perhaps, consulted my happiness better by con-



concealing, than he would have done by discovering my unfortunate situation.— Whether is it better that, forewarned of approaching ills, we should stretch all the nerves of fortitude, and sternly prepare to encounter them with firmness; or that, regardless of to-morrow, we should grasp at the pleasures of to-day? This is the grand question that is agitated between *stoic* and *epicurean* philosophers. The system of the former inspires a noble equanimity, but at the same time mars the enjoyment of gay and social pleasure: that of the latter, steep us for a moment in rivers of pleasure, but leaves us, dissolved into weakness, a helpless prey to adverse fortune. Yet the constitution of our nature seems to favour this last system; for we are not so much disposed to prepare for calamities, as to expect subjects of joy.

Hope springs eternal in the human breast;

Man never is, but always to *be* blest.

In favour of the same system it may farther be urged, that Providence covers futurity,  
 5 and



and all its evils, with a thick and impene-  
trable veil, as if to prevent the prospect  
of succeeding sorrows from souring the  
enjoyment of present pleasure.

THUS, gentlemen, you see that I am a  
generous adversary, having endeavoured in  
this manner to plead the cause of M. de  
Cheseaux against my own present feelings.  
The uncertain conclusions of *vain philo-  
sophy*, however, I submit to the correction  
of those sublimer doctrines which are so  
well understood by Messrs. A——d.

WHATEVER sentiments I may feel, for  
the present, towards M. de Cheseaux, I  
think it justice to him to repeat, on this  
occasion, that I look upon him as a care-  
ful and vigilant mariner, cautious, perhaps  
even to timidity; from friendship as well  
as duty, anxious to promote the interests  
of his employers; and that the singular  
and constant attention which he paid to  
me during the passage to Bourbon, fills



EUROPE, ASIA, *and* AFRICA. 97

me with regret, that I cannot in all respects think so well of him as I did.

I HOPE soon to write to you from Madras, or from Pondicherry.

I am, &c. &c.

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H

LETTER



## LETTER X.

To General Bellecombe, in Pondicherry.

On board the Ship Briffon, in the Road  
of Pondicherry, 7th Aug. 1778.

**Y**OUR Excellency has been informed by Captain de Cheseaux, that we \* are passengers in his ship bound for Pondicherry. But being, to our inexpressible mortification, detained on ship-board, as we had been on former occasions, by the severity of our captain, we consoled ourselves by a firm confidence in your Excellency's humanity and justice.

OUR long confinement to a crowded quarter-deck, has rendered us ardently desirous of liberty. That first of all blessings, we expected to have received from

\* This letter was written in the name of the Rev. Mr.

Y—e, and that of the author.



your Excellency's virtue yesterday. Be pleased, Sir, to indulge us with the liberty of stating those sacred claims which entitle us to your Excellency's protection.

WHEN we embarked at L'Orient on the 27th day of January last, your sovereign and ours were on terms of peace and friendship. If the influence of policy or of ambition, controlling the dispositions of two princes naturally just, generous, and humane, has impelled them to the commencement of mutual hostilities; the faith of either sovereign pledged to the individual subjects of the other, ought not to be violated. I had the permission, Sir, of the court of France, to make a contract with the *armateurs*, for a passage to Pondicherry; and a contract for that purpose was accordingly made and ratified. Why should this contract, without any *casus fæderis* on my part, be broken? Nay, why should the sanction of the Majesty of France, be irreverently accounted as nothing?



WE have heard, with regret, various reports that hostilities are already begun in Hindostan. We hope that those reports are premature. But be that as it may, we beg leave to observe to your Excellency, that in the present situation of affairs, we do not desire to enter within the gates of Pondicherry. What we ask, is, that we may be furnished with your Excellency's passport to the extremity of the territories of that settlement; with a small vessel to carry our baggage, and with palanquins and bearers to carry us to Madras.

WE beg leave again to commit ourselves, in our present distressing situation, to the protection of those virtues which have recommended your Excellency, both as a soldier and as an administrator of justice, to the confidence of your sovereign, and the affections of your fellow-subjects.

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

P. S. It



P. S. It may not be improper to inform your Excellency, that Mr. Y—e is chaplain to the presidency of Calcutta; and Mr. — declares, upon his honour, that he holds no employment, civil or military, under the English East India Company.



## LETTER XI.

To General Bellecombe.

On board the Pintade Frigate, in the

Road of Pondicherry, 9th Aug. 1778.

**U**NWILLING as we are to withdraw, for a moment, your Excellency's attention from the important objects which now occupy your mind, an irksome confinement constrains us to remind your Excellency of the application which we had the honour to make to you on the 7th instant. The letter in which that application was made, has doubtless, by some unavoidable means or other, escaped your Excellency's notice, otherwise you would not have neglected to honour us with an answer: for civility and politeness are as characteristic of the French nation, as they are inseparable from humanity and bravery.

PERMIT



PERMIT us, Sir, to represent to your Excellency, the painfulness of an imprisonment at sea after an uninterrupted confinement of five months, and within a few yards of the place for which we were destined. But if we may not be allowed the liberty of going directly to the British settlements, would it not be equally just and humane to release us from this state of captivity, and to permit us to proceed to some neutral colony?

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

H 4 LETTER



## L E T T E R XII.

Copy of General Bellecombe's answer to  
the two foregoing Letters.

**J'**AY receu, Messieurs, les deux lettres que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire. Je connois tous les desagremens de votre position : ce qui me fait le plus de peine, c'est de ne pouvoir l'adoucir dans ce moment. Je n'ay pas voulu vous laisser sur un vaisseau, qui alloit combattre ceux de votre nation ; ce qui m'a déterminé à vous faire passer sur la Pintade, ou j'ay donné des ordres pour que vous fussiez bien traité. Je ne puis point vous faire descendre dans une ville qui va être affligée, et j'ay les raisons tres fortes pour m'empêcher que vous ne vous rendriez à Madras. Si vous peséz bien toutes ces considerations, Messieurs, vous verrez qu'il ne m'est pas possible de pouvoir faire  
mieux



mieux que ce que j'ay fait pour vous. Si-tôt que les circonstances pourront le permettre, soiez très persuadé, que je serai très empressé de vous fournir les moyens pour vous rendre à votre destination.

J'ay l'honneur d'être, &c. &c.

Bellecombe.

A Messieurs — & Y—e.

## TRANSLATION.

I HAVE received, gentlemen, the two letters which you have done me the honour to write to me. I am sensible of the uneasiness of your situation; and it gives me the greatest pain that it is not, at the present moment, in my power to soften it. I was unwilling to leave you on board a ship that was going to fight against those of your nation, and therefore I determined to put you on board the *Pintade*, where I have given orders that

9

you



you shall be well treated. I cannot send you into a town that is on the point of being besieged; and I have the strongest reasons against your going to Madras. If you will well weigh these considerations, gentlemen, you will see that it is not possible for me to do more for you than I have done. As soon as circumstances shall permit, be perfectly assured, that I will be forward to furnish you with the means of reaching the place whither you are destined.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Bellecombe,

To Messrs. — and Y—e.

LETTER



LETTER XIII.

Monsieur Launay, Isle of France.

On board the *Pintade*, Port Lewis Harbour,

23d October, 1778.

**T**HE character in which we present ourselves requires an explanation, because we apprehend it is altogether singular; and in modern times, among civilized nations, without example. We are treated as prisoners without being denominated such; and as criminals, though we are not chargeable or charged with the commission of any crime. The voyage from L'Orient to Pondicherry by the *Brisson*, on board of which we were passengers, though accomplished by that ship on the 5th of August, is still unaccomplished by us. Thus situated, we think it necessary to fortify the mind of General Brissane against the false impressions of con-



conjecture and misrepresentation: and in order to do this, we take the earliest opportunity of addressing you, Sir, and communicating the great out-lines of our singular situation, which your goodness, we doubt not, will immediately lay before the governor.

UNDER the protection of the government of France, we embarked in the *Brifson*, on the 27th of January last, described as British subjects bound for Pondicherry, and having our names enrolled as passengers in the ship's dispatches: an act which was accompanied with uncommon circumstances, and which, were it necessary, would serve to authenticate, in the strongest manner, the solemnity of the protection with which we were favoured. The sacred protection thus pledged for our security, cannot in justice or good faith, be withdrawn on account of any subsequent act of national hostility. These, and other considerations, we submitted to the justice and magnanimity of General *Bellecombe*,



*Bellecombe*, who, we believe, from the tenor of his polite letter in answer to us, did not mean to violate the faith of his court, by detaining us in a state of captivity for a longer period than the critical state of his government at that time led him to think prudent and necessary.

THE *Briffon* having been taken into the service of the King, we were removed, under the denomination of *English passengers*, not under that of *English prisoners of war*, into the frigate *Pintade*; where, since the 8th of August, we have been exposed to the greatest, as well as the most unexampled hardships. We were threatened not only with the dangers of unavoidable, but with the terrors of voluntary shipwreck: our commander declaring, upon his honour, that rather than be taken by any ship of less force than *one of the line*, he would blow her up with his own hand: although he had not a boat to save either himself, his crew, or his prisoners. With  
such



such menaces constantly held up to our view, all the conveniencies of life would doubtless have been insufficient to render us happy ; but instead of enjoying such comforts, we were chilled with rains pouring into our confined cabbins through the parched seams of an apparent wreck ; destroyed by vermin, and corrupted by nastiness ; and laboured, as we do now, under a malady which baffles all the power of medicine, the sea scurvy accompanied with bile, the natural consequence of a nine months voyage, whereof we were seven months and an half at sea, without once treading on the earth. In one word, Sir, our healths, and most probably our lives, depend on an immediate relaxation of our present sufferings.

WE have thus, Sir, taken the liberty to give you a brief account of this unexpected visit to the Isle of France ; and we flatter ourselves, that the unhappy flame which has been kindled by the policy and  
ambition



**EUROPE, ASIA, and AFRICA. TII**

ambition of princes, will not consume those sacred feelings of humanity, which, in the midst of public contests, afford an asylum to private distress.

**We have the honour to be, &c. &c.**

**LETTER**



## LETTER XIV.

To Governor General the Chevalier de  
la Brillane.

From prison in Port Lewis, Ile of France,

30th October, 1778.

FROM M. Launay, who did us the honour to visit us this morning, we have learned that it was your Excellency's pleasure to transport us to France in the ship *Favori*, the latter end of next month. We readily conceive, that with every disposition which belongs to humanity and justice, your Excellency, in the honourable discharge of the important trust with which the confidence of your sovereign hath invested you, is guided solely by the principles of national policy. If, therefore, we should be so fortunate as to convince your Excellency that the interests of France could not possibly be affected by  
our



our enlargement, we are confident that your generosity would not hesitate one moment to release us from a state of confinement, so prejudicial at once to our health and our interest.

WE declare upon our honour, Sir, which we hold sacred, that Mr. Y—e neither holds, nor desires to hold, any other office in India than that of chaplain to the presidency of Calcutta; and that Mr. — is not, as has been represented, a member of the Supreme Council in Bengal, nor holds any office, civil or military, under the crown of Great Britain, the English East-India Company, or any prince of Asia; and that his only object is to pursue the business of commerce as a private merchant in India.

HAVING thus taken the liberty of laying before your Excellency our situation, we have presumed to express a wish, that, if it should not interfere in any degree with



your political views, we may be permitted to embrace the first opportunity that may offer, of going either to the Cape of Good Hope, or *Batavia*.

We have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER



LETTER XV.

Gouverneur de la Brillane's answer to the foregoing Letter, received on the Morning of the 31st of October.

A Messieurs — & Y—e, a la Tour.

**J'**A Y receu, Messieurs, la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire.—Je suis fâché que les circonstances m'obligent de vous faire passer en Europe ; *mais le commandant de Madras m'a éclairé sur la conduite que je devois tenir avec vous.* Le capitaine du Sartine s'embarque avec confiance à Bombay, sur un vaisseau Anglois. Il avoit avec lui son contre-maitre. Ils sont arrivés à Madras en pleine paix, ou on les a détenus prisonniers, contre les droits du gens. Ils se fortirent déguisés pour les sauver. Le capitaine du Sartine a gagné Pondicherry : le contre-maitre a été arrêté et



amené à Madras ; ce qui a causé vos malheurs, et forcé Monsieur de Bellecombe de vous faire venir ici. Il seroit inutile de vous dire ce que vous avez vû, que les droits les plus sacrés ont été violés, et que sans aucun declaration de guerre, les possessions Francoises de l'Inde ont été attaqués. Je suis donc forcé de vous faire passer en Europe ; mais je vous donnerai en attendant tous les secours qui dépendront de moi, pendant votre séjour ici ; vous n'avez que les faire connoître à Messieurs de Launay et rien ne vous sera refusé.

J'ay l'honneur, &c.

Le Chevalier de Guiran la Brillant.

### TRANSLATION.

I HAVE received, gentlemen, the letter which you have done me the honour of writing to me. I am very sorry that circumstances oblige me to send you to Europe,



rope; but the governor general of Madras has taught me how I ought to conduct myself towards you. The captain of the *Sartine*, trusting to the good-faith of the English, went on board a ship of that nation at Bombay. He had along with him his quarter-master. They arrived at Madras in profound peace, where they were detained prisoners contrarily to the law of nations; and made their escape in disguise, in order to save their lives. The captain of the *Sartine* reached Pondicherry: the quarter-master was taken, and sent back to Madras. These are the circumstances which are the cause of your misfortunes, and which have constrained M. de Bellecombe to send you hither. It would be needless to repeat to you what you have seen; that the most sacred rights have been violated, and that an attack has been made on the French settlements in India, without any declaration of war. I am, therefore, under the necessity of sending you to Europe. In the mean time,



I shall give you every succour in my power, as long as you remain in this place: you have only to make your wants known to Messrs. Launay, and nothing shall be refused to you.

I have the honour, &c.

LETTER



## LETTER XVI.

Messrs. A———d and Son, Rochelle.

From the Town Prison of Port Lewis,

Isle of France, 7th November, 1778.

THE letter which I send along with this, carries me into the road of Pondicherry. I shall now trouble you with a recital of the injustice and cruelties I have been forced to suffer since; a great part of which is owing to the disingenuity, not to use an harsher expression, of Captain de Cheseaux, and the rest to Commissary Gonet of L'Orient. Being refused leave to pursue our course to Madras, either by land or water, we were removed, on the evening of the 8th of August, without any previous notice, from the *Brisson* to the *Pintade*, a frigate armed *en flute*. On the 13th this ship was ordered on a service, which exhibited to our view



a new species of warfare, in the capture and plunder of eleven Indians, in an open boat at anchor, loaded only with fire-wood, which they declared, with great simplicity, they had intended to sell at Madras. Two of these miserable creatures, decrepit with age, with meagre bodies, white heads and beards, and humble supplicating attitudes, presented so moving a spectacle, that it might have procured not only *theirs* release, but also that of their fellow-captives. Their small vessel would seem to have been their constant habitation, as it contained their money, their books of religion, and all their apparel. Their poor **ALL**, the wretched acquisition of painful industry, perhaps of the labours of their ancestors, was taken from them, their boat scuttled, and themselves made captives, or rather slaves; and all this without benefiting their merciless plunderers.

**F**RIGHTENED beyond measure, without provisions, liquor, or water, and with only rye-flour of the coarsest quality, we cruized



to a great distance, even as far as Ceylon, until the evening of the 24th of August, when, being off the road of Pondicherry, a *quartier marron*, or Indian boat, brought a written intimation from M. Bellecombe, that the English squadron lay at anchor to the windward of the road, and the French to the southward. We instantly put about, and in order to get provisions, as well as to avoid the danger of being taken, we steered, having one hundred and seven men on board, to the savage island of *Niccabar*, (near the west end of *Sumatra*) where we got coco-nuts, a few chickens, and water.

MEANWHILE our bodies were deeply wounded by cock-roaches, and other vermin in the *Pintade*: we were obliged to use that linen which we had already used in the *Briffon*; and for a long time we wanted water for tea or soup, or for diluting medicines, until Providence, by a heavy rain, enabled us to catch some upon the decks. We were limited to one  
 5 meal



meal in twenty-four hours, twelve persons being reduced to the necessity of subsisting upon a Niccabar chicken, which is about the size of a large pigeon; and about two pounds of salted pork, which upon a less dreadful occasion I should have called rotten and nauseous. Happily two cases, containing twenty dozen of excellent claret, remained of my stores, which served us all with a glass twice a day; but there was not in the ship either tea, sugar, or spirituous liquor, or so much as a wine-glass or drinking-cup, and coco-nuts were substituted in their room at *Niccabar*.— During the last five weeks of our cruize we were deprived of the privilege of the council-chamber; and also, during the hottest part of the day, of the awning on deck. Our captain, in order to shew his newly-acquired authority and antipathy to the English nation, declined to countenance us with the common salutations of the morning and evening. My bed was not once made for twenty-four days, nor could I undress at night on account



count of the vermin. I was at last obliged to wait upon myself, as bed-maker, hair-dresser, water-drawer, shoe-cleaner, &c. &c. The sepoy and India prisoners, for want of nourishment, looked like so many ghosts; and though they were scarcely able to crawl, were treated with shocking barbarity. We had only fifteen white men on board, (Frenchmen,) all of whom were officers, one excepted. If there is any merit in having saved the ship, it belongs wholly to Mr. *Riccard*, who is nephew to *M. de la Vigne*, the commandant of the port of *L'Orient*.

IN this situation we were brought to this island. Numbers of people came on board the *Pintade* the first forenoon, but the instant it was known we were prisoners, all communication was stopped, and only two officers left in the ship, until a late hour of the second day, when M. Launay, the governor's aid de camp, and Major Thomé, visited us, to declare—"that we were prisoners of war; that we were to be confined in Fort Blanc (two miles from town;) that



that the governor had received positive orders particularly concerning us; that he was directed to send us back to France; but that as our healths were greatly impaired, we should be indulged with a residence in prison until we should be in a condition to embark. He told us, finally, that the major had come to conduct us to the fort, and that we were to converse ONLY with Mr. Launay. He added, after a short pause, that a *traiteur* should send us dinner and supper from town, at our own expence.

WE were instantly conveyed, with our baggage, by water to the fort. There being but two apartments in that building, and both of them occupied, Major Thomé civilly gave us the choice of lodging either in the kitchen, or under a shed, where gun carriages were kept, or in the gun-room with the soldiers. I asked the major, if, being prisoners of war, we were accounted as criminals? "No, certainly not!" I then said, that as the kitchen was

infinitely



infinitely worse than any dungeon, it would be better to run the risque of death at sea, than to perish miserably in so horrible a mansion; therefore, I entreated him to embark us in one of the vessels that was to sail within a day or two for Europe. The Reverend Mr. Y— desired that one of the foldiers might be permitted to shoot him through the head. The major replied, that he would represent our situation, and our desire to embark for Europe, to the governor. We lay that night, without sleep, on the benches with the foldiers in the guard-room. Next day, an officer appeared about eleven o'clock, to conduct us to the town-steeple; the third floor of which is now our apartment. It is immediately over the main-guard, having two windows to each of its four sides; and being elevated above every other house, it enjoys a pure air, and commands a full prospect of the harbour, the forts, the parade, the barracks, the government-house, and the environs of the town. There are three flights of steps, by



by means of which there is a communication between our chamber and a terrace, on the summit of the building. Thither I generally repair in the morning, before any of the inhabitants are awake, and view all the places around. I then come down, and having access in the morning and evening to the terrace over the main-guard and post-gate, I walk there till chocolate is ready: the rest of the day I employ in reading and writing, until the terrace becomes cool towards evening, when I take another walk, eat a salad, drink a bottle of cool wine, and then retire into an apartment which admits two beds, of about twenty-four inches each in breadth, and an empty space between them of about fifteen inches. The officer upon duty, and M. Launay are allowed to visit us. Our *traiteur* is permitted to see us twice in the week. When our laundress comes, she is accompanied by a corporal. Even the clock-maker who winds up the town-clock, when he passes our apartment for that purpose, is attended by a non-commissioned



missioned officer: nay, if a negroe comes to do any little business for us, such as fetching or carrying our linen, he is accompanied by a soldier. The very messenger of a letter from the governor, although an European, was attended in like manner. After a confinement of some days, we were given to understand that we owed our bad usage to the misrepresentations of M. Gonet, before we left L'Orient, and as I was not the person I was represented to be, I was persuaded to write a very adulatory letter (of which I am much ashamed) to Governour la Brilane, praying that we might be permitted to embrace the first opportunity of going either to the Cape of Good Hope or Batavia. I herewith send you copies of my *adulatory* letter, and his Excellency's answer.

IT is with concern that I am obliged to observe to you, gentlemen, that from all the circumstances which now appear, I cannot but suspect that you were privy to the orders which accompanied us from

6

L'Orient,



L'Orient, and the obligation relative to us, signed by Captain de Cheseaux. If this conjecture be well founded, you have acted, in one instance at least, in a manner unworthy of your established reputation; your professions of friendship have not been sincere; you have not fulfilled the contract into which you entered with us, for a passage in your ship to Pondicherry. But I will endeavour to stifle these notions, which obtrude themselves on my mind, and to think on nothing in your conduct towards me, but your former kindness. It is probable I may be at L'Orient, about three weeks after you receive this. Heaven only knows what awaits us in France! I intreat you, in consideration of the peculiar circumstances of our captivity, to make early application for our release. We are told, that although prisoners of war, we are to pay, each of us, 3000 livres for our passage home in an old crazy bark. Our dinner and supper now cost us 600 livres per month, without wine.



THE king has lately accommodated us with a couple of stools, two hospital beds, two water goblets, and two rusty iron candlesticks: M. Launay's kindness to his old acquaintance Mr. Y—e, supplies our other wants. I have reduced this letter to as narrow a compass, as the extent of it's subject, and my own feelings would admit.

I have the honour to be, &c.



## LETTER XVII.

To J. M—— Esq. under cover to  
W. H——, Esq. of Antwerp.

In the Town Prison of Port Lewis,  
in Mauritius, 8th Nov. 1778.

**A** DIRECT correspondence between  
Mr. R—— W—— of London and  
myself, being no longer practicable, on ac-  
count of our respective departures to op-  
posite hemispheres, we agreed to make a  
common friend the depositary of our com-  
munications; and that character, Sir, we  
flattered ourselves we should find in you.—  
You will have the goodness to transmit  
my letters to our friend, wherever he may  
be: I shall be happy if you shall receive  
as much entertainment from them as shall  
compensate for this trouble.

HAVING re-embarked at Madeira on  
board the Briffon, on Sunday the 15th of  
March,



March, we encountered alternate storms and calms for the space of eight days; after which time, we enjoyed fair weather, and a favourable gale. The peak of Teneriffe shewed its pointed top exalted above wreaths of white clouds, which, to our senses, made a chasm between the lower part of that stupendous mountain and the upper, that seemed suspended in the sky. As we passed between Teneriffe and the great Canary, in a serene atmosphere, we enjoyed a delightful prospect of the inimitable beauties of each island. While we steered our course between the Cape de Verd isles and the coast of Africa, we soon began to feel the effects of this near approach to the high land of that continent, in frequent calms, which, with a strong north-east current, disappointed all our hopes of a quick passage, and threatened us with a view of the Gold Coast, Calabar, Benin, Congo, and Angola. In the space of three tedious weeks, we crawled on to the equinoctial line—the languor of this slow progress was somewhat relieved by the amusement



of catching enormous sharks, bonnettas, and albigores. Between the second and third degrees of south latitude, upon the 15th of April, we were entertained for two hours with the examination of a kind of fish, such as had never been seen before by any person on board. As it leisurely moved round the ship, raising its enormous tail and fins above the surface of the water, I took occasion to form some estimate of its length by the breadth of the ship, and computed it to be forty English feet: its thickness I judged to be ten feet in diameter. The form of this animal resembles that of a shark: it is beautifully spotted like a leopard; in some parts, the spots on its body resemble those on the peacock's tail. The monster portended good to us: for while we were admiring its size, the beauty of its skin, and the swarms of lesser fishes with which it was surrounded, an unexpected breeze suddenly filled our sails, and overspread the smooth element on which we floated, with short broken waves, which the seamen joyfully distinguished by  
the



the name of *les têtes de moutons*, (sheeps or lambs heads.)

THE creature I had seen, dwelt long upon my imagination, and recalled to my mind the stories of the ancients concerning sea-monsters, which I began scarcely to regard as fabulous. My fancy made a wild, but pleasing excursion to the Norwegian seas, the seat of Krakens or Korvens, sea-snakes, and serpents of the ocean: animals whose stupendous dimensions had long exceeded the bounds of credibility; but which, their existence being now fully proved, are no longer accounted chimerical by the most incredulous.

It is remarkable that the animal productions of the sea are, some of them, infinitely larger than any living creature bred on the face of the earth. The animals, again, that tread the ground, are in general larger than those that fly in the air. From this analogy I should be apt to conclude, that were the interior parts of the earth,



according to the theory of certain naturalists, replete with an enormous abyss of waters, those waters must be the mansion of animals still more huge and stupendous than any known on the surface of this terraqueous globe.

HAVING been smoothly carried by a gentle breeze across the southern latitudes, we fell in, on the 7th of May, with the English Company's ships Southampton, Nassau, and Queen, with which we kept company, and exchanged social visits until the 17th, when the Queen, having on board the annual stores for St. Helena, directed her course to that island, carrying letters to Europe from all the other ships.

—It is but justice to French hospitality, to say, that the *Nassau*, having between forty and fifty passengers on board, and their fresh provisions being wholly expended, was supplied by the bounty of Captain de Cheseaux with sheep and poultry. We made the high mountains of Bourbon on the 25th of June, twenty-four



four days after our founding on the west edge of the Eel bank, nearly opposite to False Bay, at the Cape of Good-Hope. On the day following we anchored in thirty fathom water, about two miles from the town, within the beautiful and spacious bay of St. Paul.

In the course of these twenty-four days, we were so much thwarted by the currents, that after making large allowances in the daily reckonings, we were still eighty leagues farther west than we expected to be, from our calculations. I refer you for an account of the usage I have received at Bourbon, to the inclosed copy of a letter I wrote, at sea, to M. A——d and Son. I shall hereafter give you a description of *Bourbon*, and other islands in these parts; their climate, soil, productions, and inhabitants.

WE weighed anchor, and sailed from Bourbon on the 5th of July, and soon passed, with a brisk gale, over the banks



or shoals which are laid down in charts between Madagascar and the French islands of Seychelle, which is a much shorter route than the common circuit to the south-east. The natural caution of Captain de Cheseaux made him very attentive to the course: he was constantly sounding, but never met with any thing that could be any occasion of alarm. The late Admiral Boscawen sailed over those *bug-bear* banks last war with a large fleet. I think it a pity that our nation have not attained a sufficient knowledge of a passage which, at certain seasons, would shorten the navigation to India by some weeks.

NEITHER the French, nor any other navigators, except the English, take astronomical observations at sea, for the purpose of ascertaining the longitude; a piece of ignorance or neglect to which I may attribute all my misfortunes: for had we arrived but one day sooner at Pondicherry, I should have easily obtained a passport for Madras; and I should have reached



reached that place several days sooner, if our mariners had known how to correct, by the aid of astronomy, the errors into which they were led by rapid currents, which cost them, on a fair computation, four days in soundings, and laying too whole nights, through fear of approaching the coast of Malabar. Notwithstanding these delays, and the slow motion of our ship, we anchored off Tranquebar on the 30th day after we left Bourbon; and on the following day dropt anchor at Pondicherry.

It is worthy of notice, that though the French provisions are not so substantial as those of English ships, yet out of one hundred and fifty persons on board the *Briffon*, not one died in a voyage of six months; nor were there above three persons in the ship who were in any degree afflicted with the sea-scurvy. These things I attributed to the following causes:—the ship was purified once a week in temperate, and twice in hot climates, with water; and



and betwixt decks sprinkled with vinegar. The cabin doors and windows being closely shut, and the hatches fastened down and covered with tarpaulins, incense was burnt in various parts of the ship. The seamen and officers danced in a ring on the quarter-deck every fair evening, to the music of a bag-pipe; and minuets and cotillions to the violin. They had soup-meagre every day, and also an allowance of small wine or brandy; and twice a week they had an allowance of fresh loaf bread, made of coarse but sweet flour.

BEFORE we anchored in the road of Pondicherry, a conveyance consisting of three pieces of light wood, fastened together by withs or twigs, called a catty-marran, carrying two Indians, paddling in attitudes peculiar to their countrymen, brought directions on board from Governor General Bellecombe to the captain, not to let any passenger go on shore, before he should have transmitted an account of their names, countries, and destinations,

and



and until he should receive his further orders. The letter in which these instructions were conveyed, was secured from sea or rain water, and concealed from observation, in a kind of straw hat which one of the messengers wore upon his head. The attitudes of the paddlers were striking to a stranger. They were supported on their knees, having the under parts of their thighs extended along the calves of their legs, and the extremities of their buttocks resting on their heels. The catty-marran, which was about ten feet in length, and thirteen inches wide, and drew to a point at each end, was continually under water, and yielded to the surge of the sea.

WE had not been many minutes at anchor, when officers from the men of war, and from shore, came on board the *Briffon*, with the mortifying news that hostilities had commenced between the French and English in India, but not in Europe; that Chandernagore in Ben-  
gal



gal was taken on the 10th of June, and that the English army and the Nabob's, both under the command of General Munro, were on their march to besiege Pondicherry.—All the passengers except Mr. Y—e and myself received permission in the course of that day, to disembark.

On the 8th of August General Munro's army appeared, and encamped on the red hills, a league distant from the back of Pondicherry. On the morning of the 9th, General Munro summoned General Bellecombe to surrender the town and fortrefs *to the troops which he commanded* \*: whereupon M. Bellecombe immediately sent orders to M. Tronjolly to weigh, and attack the British squadron; an order which was forthwith obeyed with great alacrity. The English squadron, consisting of five sail, including the Cormorant sloop of war, appeared working up from the northward: that of the French, consisting of

\* It was alledged at Pondicherry, that the summons was in the name of the King of Great Britain.



an equal number of ships, but larger, having a superiority of 36 guns and 700 men, stood to the southward in order to preserve the weather-gage, and anchored at two leagues distant from shore. An action commenced on the 10th, which lasted with great heat for 74 minutes. I was never in so anxious a situation: on board a French frigate, in the midst of the enemies of my country, a spectator of a sea-engagement between the squadrons of England and France. — We all waited in painful suspense for the issue. At length I eagerly pointed out to the captain and officers of the *Pintade*, three of the French squadron hawling their wind and running to the southward, full 15 minutes before the action ceased between the capital ships. After the whole French squadron had, with all their sails set, quitted the field, Sir Edward Vernon's squadron remained 15 minutes on the spot where they had engaged, as if deliberating whether



ther to pursue the enemy, or to bear away in order to refit. They chose the latter alternative, having first spliced their cordage and mended their sails. In this action there happened a very remarkable incident: one broadside from the *Rippon*, pierced the hull of the *Briffon* in thirteen places, with heavy metal.

I HAD always until this day, entertained an opinion, that the English mode of aiming at the hull, was the best principle of conducting a naval engagement, with success. That opinion I am now forced to relinquish. I saw the *French* squadron flying to windward, carrying every sail and rope with which they entered into action; and I saw the *English* keep the sea as victors, but so mauled in their sails and rigging, that for a considerable time they were unable to pursue, or even to sail before the wind. I do believe, that had only the quarter-deck and some of the upper guns been levelled  
5  
against



against the rigging of the enemy's ships in the action, they could not have escaped.

When the Briffon anchored in the road of Pondicherry, I could perceive very distinctly, with a spying-glass, that the entrances into the town, at the south and north ends, by the sea-side, were open and defenceless. But General Bellecombe had set 5000 natives to work in fortifying those places and stockading the sea-beach. They wrought at night with flambeaus; and the General himself, who sometimes slept on the ramparts, was constantly superintending them in every quarter: and in order to raise money for carrying on the fortifications, he even pledged his lady's jewels.

On the 13th of August, the Pintade was ordered to a station four leagues to the northward of Pondicherry, in order to intercept any communication between the English Squadron at *Sadras*, and the army under General Munro.

THE



THE inclosed copy of a letter to Mr. A——d, will give you an account of our movements from that time, until our arrival at the *Nicabar* islands, which run in a northerly direction from Sumatra up the bay of Bengal; and of which I shall on some future occasion, give you a description.

On board the *Favori*, St. Paul's Bay,  
Isle of Bourbon, 10th Dec. 1778.

I REFER you for an account of my history at this place, to the enclosed copies of letters to different persons. We have now added to our cabin passengers, M. de la Combe, who is the *procureur du Roy*, with his lady and two children; the Abbé de Fontaine, chief of the apostolic missionaries, and M. Kerbalanec, one of the noblesse of Bretagne.

I SHALL interrupt this journal for the present, as we have weighed anchor, and are sailing out of the bay of St. Paul's for Europe.      Adieu.

LETTER



L E T T E R XVIII.

Monfieur Anquitol, in St. Denis.

On board the Favori, L'Isle de Bourbon,  
St. Denis's Road, 30th Nov. 1778.

I M A Y venture, Sir, to join the thanks of Mr. Y—e with my own, for the pains you have taken to procure to us the benefit and pleasure of land air, and exercise and social enjoyment on shore. I venerate the fair character of the Viscount de Souillac, and would be happier in receiving marks of favour from a liberal mind like his, even under the roof of a baker\*, and the care of a military serjeant, than in the *caresses* of his superior in the Isle of France. Nevertheless, as the ship is to remain in this road only for a few days, I chuse to decline to accept the governor's obliging indulgence.

I have the honour to be, &c.

\* A baker's house was proposed for our lodging-house on shore. Bakers in those islands, are not such reputable persons as in Europe.



## LETTER XIX.

To the Viscount de Souillac, governor of  
the Island of Bourbon.

On board the *Favori*, in the Road of  
St. Denis, 30th Nov. 1778.

**A** CAPTIVE stranger, the subject of  
a state in hostility with your nation,  
Sir, enjoys, with the highest satisfaction, the  
amiable report which flows from the grati-  
tude of a people blest with the sweets of  
justice, of your mild and equitable ad-  
ministration. Why a neighbouring island,  
under the same government with Bourbon,  
should be chastised with a *scourge*, is a  
mystery which will no doubt be unfolded  
in the course of Providence. In the mean  
time, that *scourge* serves as a foil to make  
your virtues shine with greater lustre.

RECEIVE, Sir, the first tribute which  
the justice and humanity of a person in-  
vested



vested with power, has had a right to claim from me ever since, by the violation of public and private faith, it was my misfortune to be obliged to submit to the rigours of imprisonment, and the severities of illiberal resentment. My best thanks are the only acknowledgments I can offer, for the indulgence which you, Sir, have thought proper to grant to my companion and myself, of occupying an apartment in town, under the authority of a serjeant, for the benefit of fresh air, and for recovery from a malady which knows no other cure. The time fixed for the ship's departure is now near at hand, and one or two days on shore would not compensate for the trouble of providing such an apartment as might be fit for us, and other inconveniences that would attend our leaving this place of confinement: for having discovered that M. de la Brillane had retracted his promise to M. Launay, of indulging me with a residence on shore, until I should be in a condition to embark for Europe, I sent away every thing I had, that was



not adapted to a vessel not remarkable for cleanliness, or any kind of elegance. If I have the good fortune to survive this voyage, I shall carry to your country, Sir, and to my own, a heart impressed with the character of the Viscount de Souillac, and as ready to do justice to the virtues of the public enemies of my country, as to complain of the injuries I have suffered from their injustice.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

LETTER



## LETTER XX.

To Mrs. — — —

At Sea, lat  $32^{\circ}$  S. long.  $31^{\circ}$  E. from Paris,  
in the Favori, 5th January, 1779.

**A**SHIP approaches, my dear Madam, which may prove the happy means of releasing me from a state of perfect wretchedness. The sea-scurvy, a return of my fever, together with many disagreeable circumstances, would certainly overpower my weak frame, were I forced to continue my voyage in the Favori. Yet, believe the dictates of my heart, it is not without regret that I quit this sickly and inconvenient mansion, which would have waisted me to France, and Britain, and restored me to those objects which I hold the dearest in the world, and which are ever present to my mind amidst all the cares and disquietudes of an uneasy life.



You, my friend, know the state of my mind full as well as I do myself: for to you I have unbosomed my whole heart. You know the objects of friendly attachment that occupy and deserve my constant attention. Have the goodness, my dear cousin, to communicate to *one* of those much-favoured persons, the unexpected events which have happened to me, and which will serve to explain some things which might otherwise create uneasiness.

I WROTE a long letter to you from the Isle of France, dated the 7th of November. From that letter you will have learnt what happened to me since the arrival of the Briffon in the road of Pondicherry. Nothing very material has occurred since. I embarked on board this ship at the Isle of France the 15th of November, and sailed from Bourbon on the 10th of December. I am now placed in a society not unlike that of the stage-coach in Tom Jones; a jumble of figures, constitutions, complexions, dispositions, professions, and sexes.

I shall



I shall endeavour to give you an idea of some of the principal characters in this catalogue; and it would be a breach of good-manners, not to present our captain to you in the first place, Le Sieur Deniel. It will be difficult to describe the peculiarities, or rather the contrarieties of this animal. He is pretty far advanced in the decline of life, a great hypocrite, and a greater bigot. He has long indulged himself in the beastly habit of solitary drunkenness. The first part of each morning he devotes to the offensive operation of disgorging the fermented wine, arrack, garlick, and ragouts of the preceding day; the second to prayer, or more properly the profanation of religion; and the rest to gluttony and intoxication. Equally unqualified for the functions of a master and those of an officer of a ship, he affects, with an old Davis's quadrant, to observe the sun's altitude at noon, and pirates from one or other of his officers the latitude. Sometimes he sits down at table to dinner, but he suddenly disappears, like a thief, stealing  
L 4 away



away a full plate and a bottle, to indulge his appetite without restraint in his bed-sty, where he keeps, for private convenience, a quantity of wine and spirits. By the hour of two he is stupid, and turns in to his nest; at four he has recourse to his bottle, and a plate of cold victuals and garlic in his own cabin; on the strength of which he staggers forth with an air of authority to profane the duties of religion; to exhibit an example of human frailty; and to remind his passengers of the great perils to which they are exposed under the conduct of such a guide over the ocean.

THE two principal officers of the ship, who are natives of St. Maloes, are good sensible men, and sufficiently polite. A M. L——c of L'Orient, (who works his passage home in the character of third officer) is a weak, vain, conceited, ignorant, vulgar fellow, without education or manners, and impudently familiar. He will probably avail himself of my name to visit you. I told him that you was visible only  
to



to persons who had respectable introductions, or on business. Our surgeon is a second edition of the captain; with this difference, that the want of means keeps him from being so often drunk, and obliges him to amuse himself, in the intervals between gormandizing and drinking, by mending of old stockings. The Abbé Fontaine, one of my fellow-passengers, does honour to his cloth. Nature has given him a good countenance and person, as well as a noble genius, which is highly improved by a liberal education. His deportment, which is perfectly free from unnecessary reserve and troublesome affectation, is at the same time scrupulously regulated by that decency which becomes an ecclesiastic. He possesses language, abilities, and address, which might qualify him to preside even in a society of Jesuits. He has that dignity of manner, which is the natural concomitant of conscious merit, and which the French call *l'amour propre*; but which, in few men only, would not be denominated arrogance. Were I to meet



meet the Abbé Fontaine in China, Prussia, or England, out of the clerical garb, I should conclude that he had formerly occupied an important station in that learned, persevering society of proscribed priests, who once governed the cabinets and consciences of powerful monarchs, but whose influence, grown too great to bear controul, wrecked them on the dangerous rocks of ambition.

A LONGER acquaintance than I have had with M. de la Combe, the late *procureur du Roy* in the island of Bourbon, would be necessary to anatomize this honest oddity. Nature has been unkind to his external form, and but sparing in her intellectual endowments; but she has adorned this homely and crazy mansion with some just and generous sentiments, an ample recompence for all defects. I should suppose that he has been going down the vale of life these fifteen years. He is somewhat above the size of an ordinary dwarf, and his limbs are distorted. He is  
 — 6 polite



polite and ceremonious even to excess; yet he is also peevish, rude, hasty, and in conversation blunt and sarcastical. Brought up to the profession of the law, without the advantage of genius, by the mere dint of application, he has acquired a practical knowledge of forms and rules; and a natural desire to do justice sets him far above all chicane. This knowledge of the practice of the law, and this innate love of equity, have inclined and enabled him to resist the imperious hand of oppression in support of innocence, though at the hazard of his appointment, and consequently his bread, under an arbitrary and unprincipled government. He feels for the distresses of others, and relieves them to the full extent of his power. He is liberal and candid in the highest degree, and far above all local or national prejudices. With all these virtues, he labours under the misfortune of being obliged to wear the *petticoat*. He feels his degradation, without daring to assert his prerogative by boldly resuming the breeches; for M. and Madame de la



C—e are such perfect contrasts in respect of size, that while the petticoat may serve as a cloak to shelter the husband from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, the breeches would be incompetent to supply the place of a pair of gloves to his stupendous mate. Thus, while in the cause of others he is bold and resolute, in his own he is timid and passive.

You know, my fair friend, that I am generally tender of the characters of the amiable sex, except where I have an opportunity of conveying my sentiments verbally to a real confidant. Of the *procureur's* help-mate I shall only say, that she is vulgar, and a dram-sipper; and I am sure, if she could be otherwise, she would not be continent. They have two children on board; the one is spoiled by the father, because, from some features in his countenance, he concludes that he is really his own son: the other is spoiled by the mother, for reasons best known to herself as the *true* mother of the child.

OUR



OUR fourth companion, M. Kerbalanec, a merchant of the Ile of France, and a native of Bretagne, is a cautious, prudent, cool, civil Frenchman; having as well the phlegm as the figure of a Dutchman. He is vain of his family, capacity, and education. The root may be very old, but the branch is nothing extraordinary. He seems ever attentive to his own interest; but at the same time possesses just and honourable principles, and is worthy of mercantile and social confidence. His health is bad, and I dread, that without a quick passage from the Cape, he will fall a sacrifice to a bad habit of body and the sea-scurvy. His lady, during his absence, has resided chiefly with his sister, *Madame Henri*, of L'Orient; and if the state of the war and his private affairs will allow, he means to return to the East.

DURING the time we lay at anchor in Bourbon, not having leave to land, we were visited by some company on ship-board; and amongst others, by a lady who

is



is niece to one of your nuns, Madame G——d. She and her husband, M. Bertrand, pressed on me the two enclosed letters. I have been treated with every possible mark of respect and attention: sometimes I am taken for a powerful member of the supreme council of India; sometimes for an officer of distinction; and at others, for a nobleman invested with high powers from the court of London. And it has been with difficulty that I could persuade some people that I had not lost, on board the *Briffon*, in money and effects, 30,000 l. sterling. I hope to write to you soon from the Cape.

Adieu.

LETTER



## LETTER XXI.

At Sea, on board the Ship Favori,

14th January, 1779.

**A**T length, my fair cousin, I have effected my enlargement, and within the space of an hour I shall embark in a Danish ship bound directly for the Cape of Good Hope. This desirable object I attained not without difficulty. I met with such an opposition from Captain Deniel, as had nearly blasted all my hopes of deliverance from this floating prison; and which, of course, threatened to limit my life to a very few weeks or days, as I had for some time been alarmed with dangerous symptoms of the sea-scurvy. A certain degree of firmness and management was necessary to overcome the obstinacy of that drunken blockhead, and the conceit of M. de la Combe. My honest fellow-sufferer, the Rev. Mr. Y—e, was  
silent



silent and passive, ready to adopt any measure which I should approve. I do not know that I ever, in my life, practised argument and address with such effect as I did on this occasion: but it was neck or nothing. When I first spoke to the captain on the subject of my enlargement, he declared that it was more than his life was worth; that I was committed to him as a prisoner, and enrolled as such in the dispatches both at *Mauritius* and *Bourbon*; and that he had received orders not to touch at the Cape on account of his prisoners. I asked him, if I had not paid for my passage?—"Yes, Sir." "Have I not consequently the same privileges that other passengers have?" "Assuredly Sir."—"If any of the French gentlemen chose to quit your ship, and to release you from refunding any part of the passage-money; would you, or could you, prevent him from doing so?" "No, Sir, I believe I could not." Then, having paid for my passage, I am not to be considered as a prisoner, nor have I committed any crime; therefore,  
if



if you dare to detain me on board against my consent, the first English ship that comes along-side, will, when I tell my story, seize your ship and yourself; and if there be no war between France and England, will carry you into some British port to make good any damages: but if there be a war, your usage of me will undoubtedly, as soon as it is known, awaken the resentment of my countrymen, and dispose them to make severe retaliation on you or others, even if I should endeavour to dissuade them.

THESE considerations had a sensible effect on the captain's countenance and language. I immediately improved the advantage I had gained, by telling him, that I would state my case, and make my demand in writing, in the form of a letter addressed to him, that he might summon his officers and passengers to a consultation upon it; and that their determination (should it be favourable to me) being properly recorded and authenticated, would



be a justification of his conduct, in case the ship should not be taken before she should arrive in the European seas. To this he assented: I wrote a very strong letter, urging my claim from the laws of nations, the principles of common justice, and the state of my health. The council sat—the *procureur du Roy* pleaded, and within less than an hour it was unanimously decided, that I ought not to be detained on board against my inclination; and it was resolved, that I was at liberty to embark on board any neutral ship. I shall take leave of the Abbé Fontaine with pain. I am pleased and flattered by observing, that this excellent person thinks on our approaching separation with regret. When he received me on the gangway, on my return from on board the Danish ship, his eyes discovered how largely I had shared in his affections.—“I see, said he, by your countenance, that you have succeeded with the Dane.” Madame de la Combe shed tears, and her two children cried. I was not surprised that the children did, because I shewed



shewed an attachment to them, and often fed them.

I HAD a smart opposition to encounter on board the Danish vessel, which originated from that strict neutrality she was instructed to observe. It was with difficulty that I obtained leave to go on board, even as a visitant. Had I not had the good fortune to meet with a very sensible and liberal person in Mr. B——d, who was super-cargo, and also one of the owners of the ship, my arguments from treaties, laws, and customs, would have had but little influence on the mind of my other countryman the captain.

THE second officer, a real Dane, accompanied me back to dine in the *Favori*. We shall take leave of this ship immediately, as the desert is served, and the coffee with its chasseur ordered quickly, to gratify my desire of enlargement.



My next letter will be from the country of Mynheers and Hottentots. Adieu, my dear cousin — may God continue to guide your thoughts, words, and actions!

My M LETTER



L E T T E R XXII.

The Honourable W. H——s, Esq. Governor General, &c. &c. in Calcutta.

In the Town Prison of Port Lewis, Isle of France,  
17th November, 1778.

**W**E arrived in Pondicherry road on the 5th of August. The papers that accompany this letter will give you an idea of the treatment which Mr. Y—e and myself have received, from that time until now. What might have been improper to have mentioned in those papers, I shall now take the liberty of laying before you.

IT seems evident that France had long meditated a blow in the East, and that it was the prompt and vigorous measures adopted, on your part, Sir, which alone prevented it. Some time before my



departure from France, in the month of January last, the *Consolante* frigate brought secret intimation that a treaty was concluded with Hyder Ally by M. St. Lubin, the French minister, hostile to the Nabob of Arcot and the English East-India Company, to which the Rajah of Tanjore had also acceded. We arrived at Bourbon on the 23d of June. Here several circumstances concurred to impress our minds with an idea, that either hostilities had already been begun by the French in India, or that a rupture would soon happen, in which they would be the aggressors. The captain of the port declared that he came on board under the strongest apprehensions that the *Brissot* was an English man of war, which might carry him prisoner to India. Here M. de Cheseaux, commander of our ship, to our great astonishment, exhibited to the Governor of Bourbon positive orders from the Commissary of L'Orient, not to suffer the two English passengers to land; and it appeared, farther, that he had obliged himself, by writing, to obey that injunction.



tion. A gentleman at St. Paul's had the candour to tell me, that if he should take charge of my letters for France, to be sent by the ship *Fitz-James*, then hourly expected, he might be called upon to produce them. Dr. C——n, who brought some letters to Mr. Y——e for his friends in Bengal, delivered them into his hands open; for it was probable, he said, that all papers would undergo an examination at Pondicherry. One of our French passengers, who was an utter stranger in India, told me, that before he left France, he was assured of a military commission in the service of an Indian prince in alliance with France. And it was asserted as a fact at Bourbon, that the *Sartine*, commanded by M. Coronat, with all her stores and ammunition, were sold to Hyder Ally.

I know not whether I ought to mention to your Excellency, that M. Bellecombe and his officers were, or pretended to be, well acquainted with the most secret resolutions in the supreme council of Bengal;



those in the council of Madras; and with all the intimations, orders, and news that came by the packets from *Suez*. They say, that the Governor General had twice protested in council against hostilities, but that Mr. Barwell, who hated the French nation, was violent, and obtained a majority in opposition to the governor's sentiments; that Governor Rumbold, General Munro, and Commodore Sir Edward Vernon, had in like manner entered their protest against the orders of the supreme council, for besieging Pondicherry; that the house of M. Guinett, a French surgeon in the Black Town, is a receptacle of spies; that if Pondicherry shall be reduced, a M. Moracin is to reside in Sadras, and a M. de Larche in Madras, and that through them all intelligence is to pass. M. de Larche is a native of India, and will not, they say, be considered as a French subject. It is certain that there are, or were, very active and well-informed spies lurking in all the English settlements.

I THINK



I THINK it right to acquaint you, that there is a scheme in agitation, which, as soon as the Flamand shall be refitted, will probably be executed. It is intended to take possession of the small island of Mambaze, in latitude  $4^{\circ}$  South, on the East coast of Africa. The Portuguese were driven from this island by the Arabians. It will be exceedingly convenient for French traders, as a place of refreshment; it will be of great advantage in the negro, ivory, amber, and gold trade, and for carrying on a commerce with the Red Sea. It is needless to take notice how much such an establishment would be injurious to the English commerce in the Arabian gulph, as well as to our navigation through the channel of Mosambique. I refer you for an account of the present state of these islands to the enclosed papers. I expect to find an opportunity of conveying this letter from Bourbon to the Cape of Good Hope, where I shall write a postscript.

LETTER



## LETTER XXIII.

To ———, Esqrs. London.

Cape of Good Hope, 1st Feb. 1779.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

ON the 15th of January I embarked in a Danish snow, which came to anchor here on the 22d. The history of my imprisonment and correspondence with persons of various descriptions, could not be given in a single letter without infinite time and labour. I therefore refer you, for many particulars, some of which you may think not unimportant, to copies of letters I wrote to different persons on former occasions.

THE French administration certainly aim at recovering their former influence, and extending their commerce, in Hindostan;  
a resolution



a resolution from which nothing can divert them, but the conquest of their African islands. The Company and the British government cannot, therefore, be too quick and active in concerting the means for attaining this end. Should the reduction of the French settlements in these seas, become an object to the government of Great Britain, I would furnish several observations which might be of use in making such arrangements in those islands, as would contribute at the same time to the satisfaction of the inhabitants, the advantage of the company, and the interest of the British nation.

AT length Pondicherry is reduced, after a brave resistance by an handful of men, defended in many places only by new mud-walls. I am not a military man, nor do I pretend to military skill: but in warm, and indeed in all remote countries, whatever be their climate, the slow approaches practised in Europe against regular fortifications, are extremely injudicious;  
the



the number of men lost in a general storm, being always far short of the multitudes destroyed by bad nourishment, inclemency of weather, and continual skirmishes in a long siege: besides, that delays ever discourage the besiegers, and give confidence to the besieged. To these considerations may be added, the risque incurred, in slow approaches, of being obliged to raise the siege; a necessity to which the English army, before Pondicherry, might have been reduced, if relief had been sent to the garrison of that town, either from Hyder Ally or from Europe. I anxiously wished to be on shore, because, having learned the state of the place besieged, I could have given useful information to those who besieged it; and particularly, could have pointed out two places where assaults (feints in the mean time being made in others) would have so divided the small force that defended Pondicherry, that it must soon have been obliged to surrender.

I THINK



I THINK I do no disservice to the East India Company, when I declare to you, gentlemen, that in my humble opinion, consequences the most dangerous to the British commerce in Asia, are to be dreaded from the public and private insults that are offered with impunity to the Nabob of the *Carnatic*. The French, Dutch, and Danes, are well informed of the indignities that prince suffers within his own dominions, from attornies, private merchants, and even his own military officers. Can a prince, within his own territories, be legally sued for debts by *common actions*? or, is it consistent with good policy, and the dignity of so respectable a body corporate as the English East India Company, to suffer a common attorney of the mayor's court, to write insolent and menacing letters to the sovereign lord of the Carnatic, of whom the company hold many of their possessions? Would the Nabob's own officers in the town of Madras stop the young Nabob's carriage, personally abuse him with the lowest and most scurrilous



scurrilous language, and even threaten to strike him, if a wise and just government were established in that presidency? Let us recollect, that the young prince, who was thus insulted, is general of all his father's forces: And is the present a time to destroy that mutual confidence and esteem which ought ever to subsist between a general and his troops, and without which, victory over a foreign enemy is sacrificed to internal distrust and dissension?—A mind, in the vigour of youth, is not always proof against repeated insults, even in countries where princes are regarded not as demi-gods, but as men, by their subjects; and where state and pomp do not, as in Asia, constitute the security and strength of government. How mortifying then must it be to a prince, bending under the weight of years, his treasures, body, and mind, exhausted in the defence of his country and service of his allies, instead of receiving Asiatic veneration, to be treated with contempt? Such a degradation is infinitely more painful



ful to a feeling, elevated, and princely mind, than death. In supporting this weight of affliction so long, the Nabob has exhibited fortitude almost more than human. Time will disclose to the East India Company, the qualities of that prince, and discover also, perhaps when it is too late, how grossly they have been abused by misrepresentations of facts and circumstances. After so old, so firm, so approved an alliance, the *system of expediency* now adopted, is indelicate, and new experiments may prove dangerous. — In the mean time, it would be good policy in the company to concert with the old prince the choice of his successor: a measure that may be necessary to prevent civil or family controversies at a time when disunion and diffidence, or even delays or incapacity, might suggest dangerous ideas, and stir up foreign commotions on the coast of Coromandel. — Hereditary right is not limited in Asia, as in Europe, to seniority. It is, in many cases, thought enough, that dominion pass into the hands  
of



of one of the *family* to whom it originally belonged.

I OFFER these sentiments with freedom, being fully persuaded that they are just. I have learned them from much conversation with well-informed foreigners; and am convinced of their propriety, from a knowledge of the political and commercial views of the rivals and enemies of the British nation.—I wish the company knew how feelingly the French lament the original error of Monsieur Dupleix, in not having formed a connection with Mahomed-Ali-Cawn, rather than with pretenders and usurpers. A knowledge of this fact, would enhance the merit of the Nabob, and strengthen their attachment to his person and family.

Adieu.

LETTER



LETTER XXIV.

To J—— M——, Esq. London.

Cape of Good Hope, 10th Feb. 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

**H**AVING unexpectedly become confidentially acquainted with persons of some rank here, I am confirmed in notions I had long entertained of your neighbours of the *amphibious* kind, which I shall take the opportunity that now offers, of communicating to you.

It is some years since I could clearly perceive that Amsterdam leaned unnaturally towards France, against Britain. Rotterdam, the Hague, and the other towns of Holland, are otherwise disposed; but the influence of Amsterdam is great, and the Dutch East-India Company have very in-



confiderately thrown their weight into the same scale. The broils with America, which Holland has warmly promoted, together with French intrigues, have set Dutch politics in motion for some time past: and I can assure you, that the Superior of this establishment has declared, in confidence, “that the States will endeavour to keep a neutrality between the contending parties; but, if forced to depart from that system, that they will declare for France.” To the persons from whom I had this intelligence, I gave it as my opinion, that both the French and English nations would concur in the same measure, not to allow Holland “*to milch the cow,*” as she did last war. I took the liberty of adding, that the people of that renowned republic, had strangely renounced those sound maxims of policy which had formerly directed their public conduct. I shall give you the substance of the political lectures I have been occasionally giving to the Dutch at this place, since my arrival hither.



THE rivalship of England, I represented, was not likely to produce any new disadvantages to the Dutch, unless they themselves should wantonly provoke them: whereas France, with greater advantages than England possessed, arising from local and other circumstances, was bending all her efforts, not only to secure the means of being the manufacturer and carrier of her own wants and luxuries, but also of participating largely in the commerce and navigation of other nations; that the French nation, even to a man, detested a Dutchman, because his person, ideas, manners, religion, and the civil constitution of his country, were all of them diametrically opposite to their own; that they would give no more of their confidence to the Dutch, than policy and intrigue rendered necessary during the period in which they were driving their own points; an insincerity of conduct similar to that which they themselves, in spite of the abilities and philosophy of Dr. Franklin, were one day to experience in the Americans.—I



declared, what I knew to be truth, that the French had successfully raised the true cinnamon, cloves, mace, and nutmegs, in the Isle of Mauritius\*; and had sent plants to *Cayenne*, all stolen from *Ceylon*, *Amboyna*, and *Banda*. Such were the happy effects of Dutch partiality and French treachery! I urged, farther, the vast sums which Holland had entrusted in the English funds; and could not imagine they would break through *that bond* of attachment, if a total change should not take place in their very natures, if they should not become completely mad. While open war or secret jealousies subsisted between the houses of *Austria* and *Brandenburgh*, France could never penetrate into Holland; whereas every port, consequently the whole trade and navy of Holland, would be exposed to the naval power of Great Britain, &c. &c.

\* It was supposed that there would be shipped home this year, from the King's garden alone, 10,000 lb. weight of cinnamon, 2,000 lb. weight of cloves, besides considerable quantities of other spices.

WHAT



WHAT effect my political lectures will have on the minds of my Dutch friends, I do not know. I suspect that it will be much the same with that which is commonly produced by lectures in morality and theology. But while I foresee the part the Hollanders will probably take in that contest which is likely to disturb the world, I have the satisfaction of being convinced, that they are not those formidable enemies they are commonly imagined to be; and that, should they venture on war, they will soon repent of their rashness, and wish for nothing so much as for peace with England.

You may be assured, my friend, that there is not a government on earth which, with so much art and success, conceals from public view, and in some measure even from itself, the dangerous precipice over which it is suspended, as the High and Mighty States of Holland. When it falls, as it must do, posterity will be lost in enquiring into the circumstances which



served so long as props to the baseless fabric.

It is wellknown, that of all the branches of Dutch commerce, that with India has ever been considered, both by themselves and foreign nations, as the chief. It was this that enabled them to contend with success against Philip II. and Philip III. of Spain, the most powerful monarchs of the age in which they lived. The gold of the western world, and the renown of the Spanish name, were opposed in vain to the rich productions of the East, and the persevering industry of an infant republic, contending for religious and civil liberty.

THAT branch of commerce which first exalted them, the Dutch nation still regard as the chief source of their wealth. It is this that is the grand support of their hope and their pride. They well know, that in an enlightened age they cannot enjoy those advantages which in times of obscurity they derived from prudence, perseverance,



rance, and resolution; and above all, from necessity, the mother of invention; and distress, the parent of virtue. The nations of Europe do, many of them, manufacture or import those articles themselves, with which they were formerly supplied from Holland. The rocks of St. Eustatius and Saba, and the sand-bank Curacoa, are adapted only to the clandestine trade to which they have been made subservient, against the faith of nations and of men. Their settlements between the Oronooke and the Amazon, on the continent of South America, have, by a conduct unworthy of the descendants of those who fought for religion, liberty, and JUSTICE, under the banners of the first WILLIAM PRINCE OF ORANGE, fallen into a discredit, which, added to the expensive labour of draining and clearing the land, the maintenance of subordination among slaves on a continent, and that unhealthfulness of climate which has proved fatal to procreation, threatens the decline of this once promising colony. It is to *Asia* alone that the Dutch look,



with fond hopes of drawing the means of private and public prosperity. But when the famed establishments of the Dutch in the East are stripped of their false glare and external ornaments, a poor emaciated body appears, with all the symptoms of a galloping consumption. Their East-India trade has elevated them into an air too fine for the respiration of such heavy bodies, and threatens to hurl them back into their original morass.

THE numerous commercial establishments and colonies of Holland in the Eastern hemisphere, were wrested from the Portuguese by treachery and force of arms; or usurped from the native proprietors by assassinations, perfidy, and oppression: the settlement at the Cape of Good Hope, alone is an exception, which the justice of a surgeon purchased from the Hottentots for about 4,000*l.* in merchandize. The English East-India Company, among others, were obliged to submit to acts of barbarity from those avaricious usurpers,



usurpers, which gives them at this moment a right to revive a dormant claim on some of their most valuable spice-settlements. I shall, perhaps, hereafter shew the practicability of laying open the spice-trade to other nations as well as the Dutch, and demonstrate the peculiar advantages that would thence accrue to the British nation and English East-India Company. At present I shall content myself with stating the profits which arise from the spice-trade alone, and shew, notwithstanding, the declining state both of the Dutch nation and East-India Company\*.

—UPON the whole, the republic of Holland, that famous structure which excited the admiration and jealousy of Europe, has been undermined by its own degenerate offspring. That power which set limits to the sea, and even invaded her

\* The calculation which was here introduced, the reader will find in the Appendix, under the letter A, p. 1.



bounds, will speedily vanish like a vision. It is said, that one evident symptom of a consumptive constitution, is an insensibility of its declining state. This is exactly the case of Holland: a people who understand the rules of calculation, the principles of politics, the nature of commerce, and the various springs which give vigour and permanency to all other powers in Europe, cannot, or will not, behold their own rapid declension.

So rapacious is the avarice, and unbounded the ambition of this Republic, that she secretly labours to destroy an old and faithful ally, regardless of that certain destruction to herself, which must flow from so strange a conduct. Whether Great Britain shall have a prosperous or an unfortunate issue out of her present troubles, who can tell? But this we may predict, with a considerable degree of certainty, that if Holland should declare against England, she would thereby only hasten her own destruction. Before England becomes  
bankrupt,



bankrupt, Holland will be ruined. England has resources which will enable her to emerge from a sea of troubles; whereas Holland, with all the qualities of an amphibious animal, once immersed, will never rise again. To aggravate her misfortunes, they will be of her own seeking, and she will fall, unpitied and unlamented. What would appear venial in the conduct of other nations, in that of Holland will be thought unpardonable. Impatient of tyranny, the founders of that Republic resisted the oppressive power of Spain, with a spirit and perseverance which adorned human nature, and which could have been inspired only by a regard to religion, and a love of freedom and justice.—Their degenerate offspring, without a shadow of provocation, exercise on others such oppressions as those against which their brave ancestors took up arms with glorious success: and the impartial tribunal of the Omnipotent is likely to display its justice, by making that avarice and ambition which



were the source of their crimes, the means of their destruction.

THE vain, pompous, and ridiculous state displayed by the Dutch East-India Company in Batavia, together with those numerous governments by which they maintain their oppressions, has not only divested the directors in Europe of their constitutional authority, and transferred it to their servants in Asia, the mighty lords of their own creation; but has devoured, or diverted into private channels, that gain which arises from their usurpation, but which might have been obtained by means less oppressive, and more consonant to justice.

FROM those ideas of imaginary power, influence, and wealth, expected from the trade with India, proceeded, first the neglect, and then the entire abolition of manufactures, which, in an *artificial* country like Holland, is the only source of population.



pulation. The same false ideas have introduced luxury, and a species of mixed affectation, partaking of the frivolity of the airy Frenchman, and the austere, haughty reserve of the free-born English. From these two fatal causes, the introduction of luxury, and the decay of manufactures, the United Provinces have been gradually depopulated, and the principles of their inhabitants have greatly degenerated. Indolence and pleasure, the parents of idleness and corruption, have undermined the foundations of a republic which was founded on industry, temperance, and frugality.

THE population and wealth of this celebrated republic, are now almost wholly confined within the gates of two cities: I mean Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The standing army of the States General, in times of profound peace, consisting of 38,000 effectives, contain not in that number 2,000 natives. The navigation of the republic is carried on by a number of seamen, of which



which three-fourths are foreigners. Her navy consists of 87 ships of war, in good condition, which lie in several different ports, creating daily expences, sinking the interest of their capital, and the capital itself by degrees.

BUT notwithstanding this apparently formidable navy, it has been found impracticable to man a fifty-gun ship within a shorter time than four months, even in times of peace, with all the endeavours of the ablest and most active officer in the service of the States \*; and when she went to sea, out of about 450 reputed seamen, the captain and his officers could not muster twenty-five men capable of actual duty. Mercenaries are a temporary, but precarious aid, having no settlements in the country they serve, no families, no attachments: and whose pe-

† Captain May, an Englishman, whose service in Holland is a real loss, in a two-fold sense, to his native country, which he sincerely loves.



cuniary acquisitions, like a balance of trade, tend ultimately to impoverish the state in which they have been acquired, and to enrich those to which they are transported. It may be asked, of what mighty advantage is their extensive navy to the United Provinces, without seamen on whom they can depend, and without a possibility of arming a ship of the line in any port of Holland? From Amsterdam, their great port, a ship of war must be conducted out of the harbour without masts, sails, rigging, guns, stores, provisions, or even ballast, being buoyed by a machine which they call a *camel*. Thus exposed, might not the port of Amsterdam, wherein near half the navy of Holland is equipped, and which is the mart of four-fifths of its whole trade, be shut up by two light frigates? And if so, how much is the Dutch nation at the mercy of Britain?

THE boasted wealth of Holland is universally misconceived, and in a great measure  
fure



sure imaginary. Her extensive trade is carried on by a circulation, whereof credit is the basis; and that credit is founded on a tenure more vague than even its Eastern speculations, because it is blended with the prosperity and honour of other nations, and because the Republic wants power to enforce its claims, in case of any delinquency arising from injustice, caprice, or necessity.

THE decline of manufactures has thrown the whole command of the wealth of this country into the *judaic* hands of subtle brokers of Amsterdam. These men conspire with *negociators* to promote their mutual advantage, at the expence of their ignorant, and often misled, country constituents, by over-rating the value, and enhancing the price of securities, over and above their established commissions.

The *general* and *particular* states and corporations of the United Provinces, have contracted debts equal to eighty millions



of British pounds, at a very low rate of interest. Foreign nations have contracted debts in Holland nearly equal, (including the property which the *Dutch* possess in the British stocks) for which they pay a higher rate of interest. These two sums are the imaginary property of the individual subjects of the Republic, except such sums as they have negociated in Antwerp, and other neighbouring towns and states in Germany, which by right should be deducted out of the calculation. The difference between the interest paid by the general and particular states of the United Provinces, and that which is paid to them by foreigners, is the fund whereon the people subsist; the profits and commissions of merchants and brokers being ingrossed by a few individuals; and agriculture not being sufficient to furnish bread and animal food to a sixth part of the inhabitants. On the foundation of these loans, and the negociation of actions, or obligations circulated from hand to hand as articles of commerce, are the vast speculations of the



mercantile, calculating geniuses of Holland formed. The species of gold, silver, and copper in the country, cannot amount to ten millions sterling: the annual circulation may be computed, moderately, to be three hundred millions sterling, exclusive of nominal stock-jobbing; that is, the entire coinage circulates in idea thirty times in every year. The coins of intrinsic value are not current by legal tale; and those that are legally current by tale, bear not any just proportion to their current value; such is the base quality of their silver and copper coins. Hence it happens, that those of real value become articles of commerce, fluctuating in their value, and liable not only to mutilation, but to transportation to other countries. They are therefore often re-coined, to the certain detriment of the country on which that loss must ultimately fall, which arises from clipping, milling, and common wear. But this is a species of policy favourable to circulation, and more so to the bank of Amsterdam, whose directors, the city magistrates,



gistrates, have contrived a municipal law, by which all foreign bills of exchange are paid *in* the bank; whereas all demands on the bank are negociable only by transfers: a system which multiplies circulation, extends the influence of the bank, and artfully conceals the application of the funds, which the credulous part of the world are taught to believe to be idly immured within the stupendous walls of the stadt-house. That must be allowed to be a mysterious influence indeed, which can add in an instant from four to five per cent. to the value of money lodged in *that* fabric; which the same money could never be made to acquire in any other place, not in the strongest repositories, and under the most watchful guards that can be conceived by human imagination. — To penetrate the art by which such an influence is to be acquired, would doubtless be a discovery equal to that of the philosopher's stone\*.

\* This magical increase of value, they call the *agio* of the bank.



THE wealth and security of Holland being thus dependent on the prosperity of all the states in Europe who have borrowed her treasures, it is evidently her interest to be the constant mediator of peace. In behalf of Britain, especially, she should exert every nerve, because at least two thirds of all her foreign loans are secured on the credit of that nation : and although she receives a lower rate of interest from the British funds than from the contracts of other nations, she ought to remember that it is the ready circulation which the superior credit of the British funds *alone* yield, that gives life and vigour to all her mercantile pursuits. Suppose then the British nation a bankrupt, can the ten millions of actual specie in Holland already vested, or in circulation, but intrinsically not worth eight millions, support also that circulation which arose from near fifty millions in the British funds, or secured by British subjects ? It is the want of credit alone that can shut up, *for a time*, the resources of Britain : and that want of credit



credit can only be brought about by Dutch irresolution, inattention, ingratitude, or a mixture of all three. But if the *public* credit of Britain be shaken, the *commercial*, and of course the *public* credit of Holland will also be shaken; since the credit of Holland depends on that of Britain. And farther, Britain, from her various resources, can struggle more effectually and longer with discredit than Holland can, where credit is the only spring of commerce; therefore Holland must fall a sacrifice to her own perfidy and folly, before she can perpetrate her ungrateful purposes on a great nation, who is even now her best friend, and natural ally. But what if England, incensed at the provoking behaviour of Holland, should, on some future occasion, sequester the property which the subjects of that state possess in the British funds and corporate securities? the existence of the Republic, as a commercial state, must instantly come to a final period.—Woe to Amsterdam! infatuated by an un-



natural attachment to France, although a bankrupt upon her exchange, her jealousy, ambition, and superior wealth, domineering over her more moderate and just, and less envious colleagues in the general States, unhappily for herself and for them, guide the reins which precipitate her country, first into injustice, and then into destruction.

I HAVE mentioned some, but not all the instances in which Holland has imposed on the easy credulity of other nations. Her internal police has hitherto been conducted on the principles of wisdom and justice: but she is in reality as much unacquainted with civil liberty, as she is oppressed by taxes. There is not a government in Europe that exercises internal tyranny more despotically than the magistracy of the United Provinces: nor any which exacts so great a proportion of private, in order to secure public property. But the public revenue, as well as the internal



ternal police of Holland, is admirably well conducted. It is levied in a manner worthy of the antient legislators of the United Provinces, and fuitable to that attention which was *formerly* paid to commerce and mercantile credit, the basis of the power and reputation of that nation. A deviation from those principles which govern the internal police and public revenues of the Republic, would soon unite the Harlemermer and the Zuyder sea, in spite of those narrow, unsubstantial arches which arrogantly labour to keep them asunder. The slimy substance which the torrents of the Rhine carry into the beds of the canals of Holland, and which of course raise the waters with which they are filled to greater and greater heights, render it necessary to raise, in the same proportion, the dykes within which they are confined: this will require more solid matter than mixed strata of sand and loam, the remains of turf-pits



most injudiciously exhausted †. The violence of northern storms dashing against the sand-dykes which guard the coasts of Holland; the terrors of a junction between the Maese and the Texel, and the Harlem and Zuyder seas, will furnish incessant employment for the wealth as well as the vigilance of the Dutch; which, while it will tend to curb their ambition and power, will render them useful examples of industry and perseverance to their neighbours.

BEFORE I conclude this letter, the length of which I am afraid has already exhausted your patience, I must mention a fact, which shews the declining state of Dutch commerce and power in a manner still more striking than all the foregoing reasoning.

† The Dutch, to whom the fumes of *pit-coal* appear equally unhealthy and offensive, have carried off, for the purpose of fuel, that turfy soil which supplied materials for their old dykes, and in many places nothing is left but gravel.

THE



THE original establishments of the Dutch company in Asia were so considerable, and the mortality there so great, that they required nearly an annual supply of 5,000 recruits, to uphold about 7,000 effective Europeans in garrisons at the Cape of Good Hope, Java, Ceylon, the Malabar coast, Coromandel coast, Bengal, Sumatra, Molucca, Siam, and the Eastern and Molucca islands. Of late, necessity, not a spirit of œconomy, or less apprehension of danger, has forced them to submit to a reduction of their whole European force in Asia to about 3,000 men, distributed in their several garrisons thus, —at the Cape, under 500; Java under 1,000; Ceylon, about 500; the east coast of Hindostan and Bengal, 250; the Malabar coast, about 200; the coasts of Sumatra, Malacca, and Siam, about 150; and the islands of Borneo, Celebes, Ternante, Timer, &c. comprehending the Molucca spice-islands of Banda and Amboyna, about 400.



P. S. One of the Emperor's ships, under the direction of Mr. Bolts, arrived here a few days ago from China. She brings accounts, that another vessel was to follow in the course of a month; that Mr. Bolts had been more successful in his enterprize than had been expected; and that Hyder Ally Cawn had ceded to the Emperor part of Mangalore. The Portuguese, according to the report of this ship, have offered a territory to his Imperial Majesty, for the purpose of building a town; and Mr. Bolts has established a colony at Rio de la Goa on the east coast of Africa, not far from the most easterly Dutch settlement in that quarter of the world; but he is to remain in India for some time longer, and then to return to Europe by Suez. Four of the English Company's ships were to have sailed the first of January. It is added, that almost all the trading mandarins in Canton had become bankrupts, whereby many Europeans would be great sufferers. This  
last



last article of intelligence, as I conceive, is a political manœuvre of the Chinese, previous to their suspension of all European commerce,

LETTER



## LETTER XXV.

To J. M—— Esq; London.

Cape of Good Hope, 16th April 1779.

**T**HIS is likely to be the last letter which you will receive from me before I get to India. A *Dutch Mercury* (a prodigy !) hath undertaken, for the price of about fifty pounds, to transport me hence ; if wishes could add velocity to the flight of that *messenger*, my passage would be a quick one. I am to embark in the ship *Mercure*, Captain *Dubne*, on the 25th instant, for Negapatnam, on the Coromandel coast.—I have promised a female relation in France, a particular account of my observations in this country : She has a genius and understanding, which education and a love of reading have improved above the generality of those of either sex. I shall mingle  
description



description with politics; and a copy of what I am to write for her entertainment, will carry on this narrative as far as it relates to the Cape of Good Hope.

I AM this instant returned from accompanying and taking leave of Mr. Daniel Barwell \*, who had been captured in the ship *Osterly*, and is now embarked as passenger in one of the Dutch company's ships for Holland. I never part with an acquaintance, without feeling the impression of social love, tinged with melancholy, for some time after.—With the fire peculiar to a *kindred* climate, this young gentleman possesses a large portion of good sense, strength of memory, discernment, and political address; and I doubt not, from my observations on his character, that with all his natural warmth of constitution and youthful propensities, he is a friend to truth, to candour, and to honour. He lived in the same house

\* This young gentleman was drowned on the coast of Zealand, where the ship was wrecked.



with me since the second of March ; and I believe, that had we been longer together, I should have reaped advantages from many sensible and judicious remarks in his conversation, although he has some flights, and a forwardness in his deportment. I wrote you by him, merely to make you acquainted with each other.—He was fond of reading, and digested what he did read.—He furnished me with the means of perusing a work, which *he* thought dry and insipid.—It is a work of great labour and ingenuity ; I had heard of it, and anxiously desired to see it, because it treated of such commercial and political matters as have long furnished a subject of speculation in my solitude.—Thus have I, accidentally, had an opportunity of cursorily reading the last and greatest work that hath yet appeared on the public stage, from the inimitable pen of Dr. Adam Smith, “ *On the nature and causes of the wealth of nations.* ”—It is a species of vanity to say, that I admire his disquisitions ; and that they discover



discover throughout, new and just ideas, which enlighten the minds of his readers, even so far as to arm them with arguments in opposition to his own; and which, most probably, would not have been conceived, had not his superior genius struck out new lights to enlarge the mind, give scope to the imagination, and draw aside the veil which, from the beginning of time, had obscured the objects of which he has treated.—It is a performance that every statesman and legislator should study and digest.—Yet I have presumed to differ in opinion, in a few instances, from that great source of knowledge. I have done it with respectful deference; and I submit my crude observations to your criticism: but remember, that I do it to a *friend*, and not to a *critic* \*.

ALTHOUGH I would not venture my person to the uncertain chance of a pas-

\* The observations are in the Appendix B.



sage to India by the route of Batavia, I committed, under Dutch colours, three several letters to the G— G— in Bengal, and to Mr. S—— S——, a gentleman of polite education, abilities, and public confidence in Madras, with such informations as my peregrinations among the French, Dutch, and Danes, furnished to my researches. In my letter to Mr. H——gs, I was particular in the description of the late naval engagement between the squadrons under Sir Edward Vernon and the Chevalier Tronjolly, of which I was a near and anxious spectator.—I represented the very dangerous intercourse which had been carried on between the English presidencies and the French governors in Hindostan; the present state and force of the French Islands, with the oppressions exercised by governor de la Brillanne; the political necessity of conquering them, and the easiest mode of effecting it, with manifest advantages to the inhabitants and the British company and nation; the views of France in India, and on the island



island Mombaze, on the east coast of Africa; the exultations of the French, both in Pondicherry and the islands, at the escape of governor Chevalier from Chandernagore, in whom the government of France rested their chief dependence for political information and address, for the purpose of planning and executing their designs in India; and I took the liberty of pointing out the dangerous consequences of suffering either M. Chevalier or M. Bellecombe to repair to France, as the reputation of M. Bellecombe was as distinguished in arms as M. Chevalier was in politics.

BEING heartily wearied with writing, instead of communicating various matters which have occurred since my arrival here, I refer to the accompanying papers, N<sup>o</sup> 1 to 7—comprehending copies of letters to London, to the Hague, to France, to Madras, and to Bengal; their chief entertainment will be the interest which you may have in what concerns



me, and the new ideas which many circumstances will convey to your patriotic mind, concerning national affairs. At any rate, they may serve as memorandums to myself, if ever I have the good fortune to return to Europe; but let me entreat you not to communicate my letters, unless partially, and under the sacred seal of confidence. This, however, having been originally understood, it is unjust to surmise the contrary, and

I am, &c.

LETTER



LETTER XXVI.

Mrs. ———, France.

Asia, Peninsula of Indostan, Negapatnam,

1st July, 1779.

MY DEAR MADAM,

**I**N six letters, if fortune has granted them a safe conveyance to your fair hands, you have had an unpleasant narrative of my peregrinations, from the time of our parting until the latter end of January, when I arrived at the Cape of Good Hope. During my long residence among the formal and dull inhabitants of that place, nothing occurred which, to your delicate taste and sprightly imagination, could have been matter of entertainment. In that unsocial, inhospitable, boorish, and mercenary community, where every thing in human form seems to be



moved mechanically by springs and pendulums, there is an uninteresting sameness, a tedious uniformity, barren of all incident and anecdote; and therefore not very likely to supply materials for the amusement of leisure, by such relations as might easily swell a letter from London or Paris, or most other great towns in Europe.

BUT though the unvaried course of life, and inanimated manners of the Dutch, afforded not matter for a series of letters from the Cape; when I take a retrospective view of that scene, and consider it as one object, it yields scope for various observations, which you may think not uninteresting. The Mynheers and Hottentots, together with the delightful country they possess, shall therefore, if I can, contribute *one* letter at least to your amusement; which, by the way, when I write to you, Madam, is not the only object I have in view. I know you are capable of making improvements on my observations,



observations, and of reflecting knowledge on the author of your information. It will be the highest satisfaction to me, to be the instrument of enlarging, in any degree, your knowledge of remote countries, and of the various pursuits of mankind: objects which, I know, engage much of your attention; though the sensibility of your nature, to the fortune of your fellow-creatures, renders accounts of human characters, conduct, and fate, of all other subjects, to you the most interesting. And lastly, by writing to you, I revive in my breast those pleasing sentiments which your presence always inspired, and which absence has not diminished.

I EMBARKED at the Cape on board of a Dutch ship bound for India, on the evening of the 26th of April, without regret, without an involuntary sigh, or even the secret application of an onion to force dissembled tears. In the ship I



found every thing clean and neat, and plenty without extravagance or waste. The captain and officers supported command by RULE, without bluster or affected dignity; and by the same *law*, a respectful deportment towards each other was preserved according to rank. Their mutual compliments, though neither high nor frequent, were without grin or grimace, plain and sincere. Had I been immured in a Carthusian friary, I could not have been subjected to greater silence, than that to which I voluntarily submitted in this floating mansion, without murmuring. My intestines were pretty well soufed, as every morsel I ate was prepared with vinegar. Such was the hardness of the biscuit, that I must have fared hard, if I had not been fortunately blessed with good teeth. But compare, my friend, this account with my descriptions of the *Briffon*, *Pintade*, and *Favori*, and then judge, whether I should not have reason to prefer twelve months imprisonment



ment in a ship of *Mynbeers* to a confinement of as many days with the *Monfieurs* at sea.

I SHALL forbear to describe the strong, athletic, clean forms of the uncivilized, but not savage, natives of the Niccabar islands, whom I saw with my eyes; or the elegant figures, beauty, and gallantry of the fair dames of Mauritius and Bourbon, of whom the tyranny of M. de Brillanne forced me to judge chiefly by report. I hasten to entertain you with the description of a place where the soil is capable of yielding all the necessaries, and many of the luxuries of life; where the climate and air favour not only the vital functions, but compose the soul, and inspire a kind of chearful serenity.

Is it then in the power of physical causes to give happiness? Methinks I hear my fair relation reply, And can paradise, which was *lost* by our first ancestors, be in rea-



lity regained by residing in any part of this globe. Undoubtedly I should not be happy in a solitary state, even at the Cape of Good Hope; but this I will affirm, after due reflection, that with the friends of my heart, I could be contented to sit down there for life.

THE establishment which the Dutch East India company have made on either side of the Cape of Good Hope, the extreme southern point of that great continent which comprehends Europe, Asia, and Africa, extends, according to computation, 450 miles eastward and westward, and 250 towards the north. To the honour of the Belgian race, let it be said, that since first they atchieved their independence by actions the most heroic, and perseverance the most wonderful in the annals of the world; they, for ONCE, regulated their public conduct by the laws of justice: for the territory in which they planted the colony of which I now write, they acquired by *fair purchase*, without fraud, without treachery,



ry, assassination, or oppression. At the same time it ought, in truth, to be remembered, that this *single* instance of the equity of the United Provinces prevailing over the passion of avarice, is owing not to the virtue of the community so much as to that of an individual, Mr. *Van Riebeck*, a surgeon, who exercised a power which devolved into his hands by chance; according to his conscience, in purchasing with baubles, an *unlimited* possession in a temperate climate, at a price below 4,000l. sterling. Thus having so advantageous a bargain, the Dutch dared, for *once*, to offend against their nature, and be just.

IN this extensive domain, the power of kind nature forcing its way in spite of the oppressive genius of an exclusive company, the population amounts nearly to 17,000, of fair European descent, and about 30,000 slaves, Africans and Asiatics. The *Aborigines* of the country, who are called *Hot-tentots*, and who are of a mild and tracta-



ble disposition, have been easily reduced to the condition of obedient subjects. They are a quiet and inoffensive people, useful to the Dutch in many respects, particularly in the management of flocks and herds of cattle. They have been very much misrepresented in Europe : and it is surprising that the fictions which have been propagated concerning them, should so long have gained credit in the world. It is not true that they are in the practice of eating raw flesh, or that they entwine their bodies with the entrails of cattle. They prepare their food with fire ; and their clothing consists of a dressed hide, which is tied like a collar round the neck, hangs down over the shoulders near to the ground, and is broad, that it may be wrapt round the fore-part of the body : besides this, they wear another covering of skin round the loins, which reaches half way down the thighs. Sometimes they have a cap for the head and shoes for the feet of the same materials. Their shoes are formed of a piece of hide, drawn closely about the foot with thongs

old 2 of



of the same. Instead of the rich oils used as ointment by the Asiatics and some African nations, the Hottentots anoint their bodies with the fat of cattle\*.—All nations in the world, not European or of European descent, use ointment of some kind or other as a preservative from the colds of winter, and a repellent of the heats of summer. Even Europeans anointed themselves in former times. The Muscovites do so still.

THE Hottentots having few conveniences for bathing, and living in a climate where they are very frequently involved in clouds of dust, have acquired habits of dirtiness; but their skins, when washed, are clear, though fallow. They are in general low of stature. Their features have a sameness in them, and are very hard. Their foreheads are promi-

\* The great Lord Bacon, who was not an Hottentot, prescribes anointing with oil or butter, as a means of prolonging human life.—*De prolongatione vitæ.*

nent,



nent, their cheek-bones high, their eyes sunk in their heads, and dull, their noses flat, their lips thick, their hair black and woolly.

THERE is a straggling nation of Hottentots, in very inland parts of the country, who are mere savages, having neither flocks nor herds, houses, huts, nor settled residence. These savages live by prey, and their abodes are caves, rocks, and trees. They use very little cloathing: some maintain that they are cannibals; but of this I cannot affirm any thing with certainty. They are untameable, and unmanageable by any means that have yet been tried. They refuse to converse, as other uncivilised nations readily do, by natural signs; and scarcely deserve to be ranked among the human species. They are, happily, very few in number, and are seldom to be seen in day-light. They make their depredations in the night, like so many wolves and tygers.

It



It is evident that the Dutch settlements at the Cape, although they would appear in most parts of the world extremely prosperous, are yet by no means in so flourishing a state as they would have been, if they had not groaned under the heavy hand of the East-India Company; who have been studious to discourage population, to crush the settlers, and to counteract, as much as possible, the natural operation of a genial soil to enrich its possessors. From what the colonists have done, even under the discouragement of a jealous and unjust government, we may imagine what they would have accomplished in more fortunate circumstances! What would have been the glorious effects of Dutch perseverance, animated by the free spirit of a Republic! The objects of monopolists are ever opposite to the general prosperity of the nations to which they belong. Their plans are not founded on the comprehensive views of sound policy, in which the chief ingredient is justice, but on partial and narrow principles of selfishness, wholly incom-



incompatible with the public welfare. The Dutch East-India Company adopted the plan of an establishment on the southern point of Africa, for no other purpose than that it might serve as a place of refreshment to their shipping in their Asiatic commerce. This end they have constantly kept in view. The improvement of their territories in that part of the world is not their object. Their policy discourages improvements in this settlement. Were the Dutch domain about the Cape of Good Hope improved and peopled to that degree of culture and population of which it is susceptible, the East-India Company well know that they would have reason to tremble lest their sovereignty over it should not be of long continuance.

THE Cape has of late years become an important object to the Company in another view: since the decline of their profits, by the uncommon charges which have supported their usurpations, and their ambition, the directors have made it a blind  
to



to amuse the deluded proprietors, and credulous public, with false ideas of solid stock and gain.

THIS country is capable of being made, by the simplest means, a populous, commercial colony. Its pure and temperate climate is favourable to health, longevity, and population. Its soil, though not apparently rich, is, from the genial temperature of the air, and alternate dews and sunshine, so kindly vegetative, that it nourishes with little culture, and almost spontaneously, whatever the husbandman, the botanist, the florist chuses to commit to its bosom. Thus it is calculated to produce whatever is requisite to the encrease of flocks, horses, and cattle; and at the same time to yield whatever is necessary to the comfortable subsistence of the human species.

THE first appearance of the face of the country, as well as of the soil, is unpromising. The richest spots and vales are mixed,



mixed, and sometimes surrounded, by mountains and sandy deserts. But the even vallies, the gravelly soil, and the abounding droves of horned cattle and horses, render the communication between one place and another neither difficult nor expensive. The country being thus variegated, and formed by the hand of nature into separate districts, is more delightful than if it had been an immense plain bounded only by the ocean. Mankind are naturally more attached to the places of their nativity or habitation, when they are situated amidst deserts, and hills, and in sequestered vales, than when they lie in great cities or populous campaigns. The field or the grove in which their father's flock *alone* fed, and to which his family *alone* resorted, are embraced by the mind, after long absence and bustling in the world, with a warm attachment: and the scenes of their earliest and most innocent life, awaken many an idea composed of tenderness and pain. This love of *native soil* is not so ardent in those who have lived  
all



all their lives in great towns, or in those flat expanses swarming with inhabitants, where every scene is common to thousands, and where no natural boundaries mark out the *peculiar haunt*, the mountain, the vale, the river, the wood, or the marsh, sacred to the rural owner, and *his* kindred and domestics.

It is from this principle, I apprehend, that persons who die at a distance from their native village; or, if in higher life, from their native *villa*, who have lived, perhaps, more than half the year in PARIS or LONDON, when they feel themselves drawing nigh to their latter end, request their surviving friends to convey their bones to the country church-yard, the depository of their forefathers, rather than the proudest *mausoleum* that the vanity of their friends might erect for them in the city.—But I return from this melancholy, but not unpleasing digression, to the southern promontory of Africa.



THE greatest want of this country, is that of timber for building, and even for fuel. The navigable rivers are separated from each other by great distances: but canals are more practicable here than in the low countries of Europe. The east side of the promontory, and the inland parts, are the richest, and capable of the highest cultivation. The two principal parts, I mean with regard to actual commerce, are *Table Bay* and *False Bay*, which are always safe; so formed and sheltered, as alternately to yield security against the two prevailing winds which are peculiar to that meridian. There are other bays very fit for navigation; but the policy of the chartered sovereigns, the East India Company, has drawn a veil over the true knowledge of them. The same jealousy which hides the knowledge of the ports to which I allude, prohibits the inhabitants from transporting, on any pretext, their produce and effects to the principal towns, coast-wise by water.

THE



THE excellent wines of the Cape, if encouraged and improved, would yield to none in taste, flavour, or delicacy, and without being either so fiery, or so liable to fermentation, would be found to possess all the salutary qualities of either old Rhenish or Madeira. Its grains are not inferior to those of Sicily. Aloes, fucotra, myrtle-wax, salt, and paints, it is capable of furnishing in profusion; as also indigo, cotton, and tobacco. It may be made a staple of a valuable slave-trade, whale-oil, ivory, and ostrich-feathers. It contains virgin copper and copper ore, and the appearance of the soil in many places indicates the possession of the precious metals. These and other articles might be the subject of an extensive trade to India, America, and Europe; and contribute as well to improve the exports of a generous parent state, in manufactures from the raw materials; as to favour, in the most important instances, the balance of trade, especially with France and Portugal.



THE Dutch East India Company restrains the discovery of mines, from principles of policy, and from the same motives which induce them to check the improvement of the country. They know, in the first place, that if the inhabitants of the Cape were suffered to improve to the utmost those advantages which are held up to them in so great abundance by the bountiful hand of exuberant nature, that country would soon become too populous and powerful to remain under the oppressive dominion of a chartered society of merchants: and in the second place, that since it is not in their power to secure so extensive a coast and country from invasion, the greatest security consists in not allowing it to become an object of temptation. Yet, under a despotic government, oppressive and jealous of improvements, wholly restrained from manufactures and commerce, and even from many branches of agriculture, the people have encreased prodigiously; and doubtless the population would be still



still greater, did not their Asiatic establishments seduce many young men from the most salubrious to the most mortal climates.

FAMILIES in this place generally consist of from 7 to 17 children, and some from 18 to 27. From the want of intercourse with strangers, they are all allied together by intermarriages; without feeling, however, for each other any kindred affection, and even without that sympathy and fellowship which prevail in other countries among neighbours.

THEIR persons are above the common stature, the men being generally above six feet in height, and the women tall in proportion. The unmarried women are fine figures, and have remarkably good complexions: but soon after marriage they become corpulent, and all their beauty, after they have once entered into that holy state, quickly vanishes away. The females appear to be more numerous than



the other sex. I compute, that at the least five-sixth parts of the whole number of European descent (17,000) are females and male children under manhood. About one fourth part of those who are descended from Europeans, reside at Cape town, and about two-fifths of all the slaves.

THE people of this place are less the descendants of the Dutch than of emigrants from France, (after the revocation of the edict of Nantz) from all the Protestant estates in Germany, and from the Austrian Netherlands.

NOTWITHSTANDING all that has been said of the political wisdom of the Dutch, I cannot help thinking, that their East India Company have for some time been pursuing measures which favour rather of low cunning and treachery than of sound policy. They seem to have been led into those measures partly by prosperity, and consequently ambition; but principally by



that uninterrupted peace which the United Provinces have enjoyed in Europe for 32 years; during which time, for the sake of a little immediate gain, they have been constantly stimulating hostilities between their neighbours and allies. Had the Company, or rather the States General, encouraged their settlement at the Cape, by inviting the settlers to avail themselves to the utmost of its fertility and extent, it would have been in a condition to furnish those necessary supplies of men for the security of their Asiatic establishments, of which supplies, the approach of a general war in Europe threatens wholly to deprive them. It is certain, that recruits for the Dutch settlements in Asia, have long been chiefly drawn from those unhappy emigrants, who having fled from the poverty and despotism of Germany, are annually kidnapped in Holland. But the avenues of emigration will be shut up by war; even greater supplies of men will be wanted than ever by the Dutch East India Company; and



these the depopulated states cannot furnish. It has been computed, on the most probable grounds, that from 27 to 30 ships carry out each of them, on an average, every year, 200 recruits; and that of the *whole* number annually exported in *all* those ships, fifty never live to return, after the expiration of their terms, to Europe: and farther, that ships bound to Batavia and the eastern settlements, carrying out double complements of seamen (their single complements being a fourth part greater than ours) have returned with scarcely sufficient strength to work their ships. The annual mortality is thus reduced to 10,000 able-bodied Europeans at the least, in the vigour of life. What a melancholy destruction of the human race! Whence is this necessary supply *now* to come? Ought we any longer to be astonished, that the profits of the Company's monopoly of spices, and other articles of trade, should have been incompetent to the charges of maintaining and protecting their settlements, and the pompous



pous parade of government in Batavia? How will they be able to maintain their usurped possessions against the oppressed natives alone, even without a foreign enemy in Europe to call forth their navy, and to oblige them to garrison their own, and the barrier towns?

As to the establishment of the Cape, it might be attacked with success by a number only equal to its garrison, of 400 or 500 effective men in the open fields: such is the position of towns, and the nature of the fortifications in that country. The country militia lie too scattered to render effectual service: and I will hazard an opinion, that the towns-people will not discover great prowess against any enemy, and more especially against a power, under whose government the privileges of commerce and agriculture would be enlarged, and which, professing the Protestant faith, would give entire satisfaction to mothers, wives, and daughters.



THE Company have reserved some ground-rents on country plantations and town settlements; others are held under a kind of perpetual tenure. As there is no exportation but from *Table* and *False Bays*, wines, grain, and some other articles, pay duties upon entering the towns. There is a considerable quantity of wheat shipped annually by the Company to Batavia, Ceylon, and Holland. Cattle and sheep for the use of shipping, are provided by contracting farmers, who pay a duty for this exclusive privilege. There are several other duties of export and import. All these taxes serve to defray the charges of government, which are indeed moderate; but the rapacity and undue exactions of the governors, have nearly determined the people to revolt from the government of the Company, and to seek redress from the States-General,

THE chief-justice, or fiscal, unites in his own person the three distinct branches of government; the legislative, the judicial, and



and the executive. This legislator, judge, and executioner, with high powers, possesses great privileges and emoluments: he can impose and levy taxes for his own use; dispense with laws; create new crimes; compound for crimes of all denominations and complexions; and, in general, dispose as he pleases, of the lives and fortunes of the whole people. It is true, there is a kind of controlling power, paramount to this highly-privileged person; but woe to him who dares to appeal to that tribunal.

MOST families manufacture their own leather, make the coats, vests, breeches, stockings, shirts, and shoes of the men; and the facques, gowns, petticoats, shifts, stockings, caps, shoes, &c. &c. of the ladies, together with most articles of household furniture; so that they are only obliged to import from Europe and Asia the gross materials, such as woollens and cottons, draperies and silks, and a few of the simplest articles of conveniency, and still fewer of luxury. They require few tradesmen,



tradesmen, because all mechanical services are for the most part performed at home, as of old among the Greeks and Romans, by slaves. The servant who waits at table, is equally dextrous at his knitting and sewing-needle, scissars, cutting-knife, awl, the axe, the saw, the plane, the trowel, and the painting-brush.

THEIR streets are spacious, airy, and regularly laid out at right angles; and they seem to have inherited and preserved the cleanliness of Haerlem and Delft. But there is one inconveniency which they cannot remedy by all their industry: The strong squalls of wind which often force themselves through narrow passes between the surrounding mountains, raise dust in the streets, in troublesome quantities, in spite of the frequent application of water from canals and occasional gutters.

I KNOW not how the Hollanders would be able to carry on their monopoly, without the seasonable refreshments of the Cape.

Its



Its vegetables, roots, and fruits are abundant, cheap, and good; the beef and mutton still more so. In truth, I think all nations trading thither, have for some time been infinitely obliged to the Dutch settlement in that corner, as it may literally be called, of the world, notwithstanding that strangers are more imposed upon there than in any country I know; for neither *Madagascar* nor *Johana* can furnish mutton, or garden vegetables; and the very wines of the Cape are so reasonable, that they are a cheap refreshment to common seamen. I am persuaded that the wines there of the second year, are more mellow than those of Europe and Madeira would be in five.

EVERY house-keeper, the governor and members of council excepted, take pensioners: and it is but justice to their tables, beds, and linen, to acknowledge, that they are all good and reasonable. I am apt to imagine, that the practice of taking boarders (for that is what the inhabitants of the

Cape



Cape mean by taking pensioners) has been handed down from the original settlers, and that the principle of pride has in this manner been lulled by habit.—But I beg pardon, I forgot that the nation of which I now write, worship no other idol than one, and that is interest.

OF the discouragement that is shewn to strangers from settling at the Cape, I need mention only one instance. All house-keepers are obliged to account every evening to the lord-fiscal, for every person entertained within their roof, under pain of censure and a forfeiture. As there is an outward appearance of devotion, and solemn morality, in the countenances, dress, gait, and conversation of these people, I was willing to attribute this extraordinary regulation to one or other of these two causes. I imagined, that either it was intended to restrain a certain kind of frolicksome immorality in private, or to secure (as in Amsterdam) the punctual payment of a tax (in scrupulous proportion to the  
quantity



quantity of custom) on a certain licensed order of good-natured, and *public*-spirited damsels, who occasionally administer to the entertainment of strangers. But I found on enquiry, that the spirit of this law had for its only object, the discouragement of all intercourse with strangers.

As the Cape of Good Hope has, for many years, been a half-way house for refreshment, *out* and *home*, pensioners as well as hosts of quick conceptions and some genius, have had frequent opportunities of drawing the strangest medleys of characters, and of remarking the various effects of wealth and climate on the passions and manners of men. The various degrees of rank, and the different stations and circumstances of persons travelling to and from India, have furnished ample scope for observations of this kind. For my part, all that I shall say, is, that my short and anxious residence at the Cape furnished matter for reflections, which neither attached me to the place of my destination,  
nor



nor prepossessed me in favour of the morals, genius, or wisdom of men, who may more properly be denominated its sojourners, than its inhabitants.

I HAVE often thought, and now I am convinced, that in order to humble the over-bearing Dutch, and to reduce their mercantile genius within reasonable bounds (as well as thereby to secure the tranquillity of Europe) they must have a king, and a mixed form of government, like England, even if their government should be extended in a south-westward direction, by encroachments on the house of Austria. For these encroachments the Emperor, I think, should be indemnified by the recovery to his family of *Alsace* and *Lorraine*. Our cousin of Orange is a sensible, dapper, princely fellow; and the present amiable princess of that House, is better qualified than any woman in Europe, one excepted\*, to give lustre and dignity to sovereignty.

\* The Queen of England.



Britain, Prussia, Russia, and the other Protestant powers of the north, by a firm union among themselves, and a fair transposition of the balance of power, are capable of erecting another monarchy in Europe.—But hold! this is downright politics; a subject proper for the discussion only of ministers of state; and my presumptuous trespasses on this dignified ground, have scarcely left room for me to say, that

I am your's, &c. &c.



## LETTER XXVII.

To ———, Esqrs. London.

Calcutta, 15th Sept. 1779.

EVER since my arrival in India, I have deferred writing to you until this time, because I wished to acquire an accurate knowledge of many particulars in which you are much concerned, and this was to be gained only by a residence for some months in this country. Although I cannot yet write so much to your satisfaction as I wish to do, it would be improper, as I conceive, any longer to delay giving you an account of what has occurred to my observation since my arrival in this famed peninsula; where I landed, in a low state of health, at *Negapatnam*, on the first of July.



THE unsettled, and in truth the critical state of this government, appears to me to have suspended, for some time, all the rational exertions of its principal members, and their most intimate friends. Hopes and fears, anxieties and doubts, have given birth to measures, as singular in their nature as some of them, I fear, will be injurious in their consequences. But were the directors instructed in the proper remedies for the disorders that pervade at this moment the political and commercial constitution of the company in India, and were they disposed to listen to the best advice, the wisest counsels and the best dispositions would be of no avail. While the present chief governor, with two votes in five, holds the chair under the influence of black servants and a foreign lady, the orders of the directors will continue to be treated with avowed contempt, and the treasures of the Company be appropriated to private uses. The reins of government are held in *Calcutta*; while the representatives of the proprietors, assem-



bled in Leadenhall-street, are considered as a set of presumptuous blockheads, assuming a power which the actual possession of the *lacks* has placed *de facto* in other hands. It is not improbable that Mr. H——s's great familiarity and close connexion with Mr. R—s, the governor of *Chinsura*, may have instructed him in the imperious sway which the Dutch company's principal agents in *Batavia* exercise over *their* constituents and fellow-servants, as well as their unhappy dependents, the natives of their settlements in Asia. I am no partizan ; on the contrary, I came to this country strongly prepossessed in favour of the men, whose measures are too public not to be known, and too unjustifiable to admit of defence.

THE censures which I have now bestowed with that freedom which I wish ever to direct my sentiments and actions, cannot in justice be extended to all the Company's servants without exception. Among these there are men well entitled to  
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the praise of both ability and honour. Mr. F——s and Mr. W——r undoubtedly possess sagacity to discern, and virtue to pursue, the true interests of their constituents, and of the English nation, as well as the happiness of the natives of Hindostan; objects which are in reality closely connected together, and which could never have been separated but by a policy equally unsound and inhuman. Nor can I omit to mention, on this occasion, Mr. B——ll, a gentleman of eminent talents and strict honour; though he may be restrained, in some degree, from opposing the measures of Mr. H——s, by an engagement on the part of his friends in England, when he was appointed to the fourth seat in the supreme council. This precaution was thought necessary, as Mr. B——ll's firmness and abilities were the only formidable opposition to Mr. H——s's mal-administration before the supreme board was constituted. Indeed, the public differences of these gentlemen, gave birth, as disputes



of this kind commonly do, to a very considerable degree of mutual animosity.

VARIOUS causes have occurred to incline me, at present, to return to England as speedily as possible; one of which may probably appear to be the effect of vanity. I have the presumption to imagine, that a knowledge of most countries in America and Europe, with various experience, have enabled me to shew how the soil and people of this country may be made to extend still farther the pursuits of commerce, colonization, and manufactures; by which the British government would acquire a present supply, as well as a permanent revenue, which would open a source of wealth to individuals, and at the same time confer on the chartered Company, advantages equal to the full extent of their ambition. I am persuaded, that my ideas concerning these matters are of a different nature from any ever entertained before in this country: and I imagine,



gine, if clearly stated, they would draw the attention both of the King's ministers and the directors of the East-India Company. These objects, if they shall not be thought chimerical, will doubtless be allowed to be grand and important. I wish to open so splendid a field of improvement in India, as will encrease the wealth of British subjects individually, and relieve the PUBLIC from an incumbrance of debt which must otherwise become insupportable.

I am, &c.



## LETTER XXVIII.

To J—— M——, Esq. London.

Calcutta, September 20, 1779.

**I** SET my foot on the peninsula of Hindostan at *Negapatnam*, on the first of July. The papers that accompany this, will give you an account of my adventures from the 8th of November, 1778, when I wrote last, to my arrival in Calcutta on the 20th of August. Our correspondence, my friend, has suffered a long interruption, but this I mean to make up, on my part, by writing to you regularly twice every week. This country affords an ample field for observation, and yields materials for speculation of every kind, in the utmost abundance. If any of my reflections should be thought worthy of *their* attention who alone can  
carry



carry them into beneficial consequences; to have been in any degree subservient to the prosperity of my country, would afford a full recompence for all my sufferings from the hour in which I embarked at *L'Orient* on board the *Briffon*, to that on which I landed on the Indian shore at *Negapatnam*. I am ambitious, I confess, of laying some of my thoughts on political and commercial subjects, before men in power and of public spirit; being convinced, that, matured by their judgment, and digested into some practicable plan, they would contribute largely to the glory of my country and the happiness of mankind. But with regard to this matter, I shall be directed wholly by the advice of my friends. In the meantime, I shall amuse my leisure by indulging a turn, on which you have so often rallied me, hoping that you and our excellent friend at least, will peruse my frequent and long epistles not without satisfaction.

HAD



HAD the English East-India Company known, and fully improved, all those advantages which lay within the sphere of their power in the East, their capital would this day have exceeded twenty millions of pounds sterling; and thirty millions would have been added to the present wealth of the nation, as I am ready to demonstrate. But what is of greater importance, the interests of the Company, clearly understood and steadily pursued, would have secured the attachment, with the felicity, of above twenty millions of useful and ingenious new subjects, and rendered them and their posterity a fund of wealth, power, and security, to the extended state. That these great benefits have not accrued to Great Britain, and also to Hindostan, is owing to the distance between these countries, which at once tempted and protected the infidelity and the intrigues of the servants of the East-India Company. I do not mean to express any virulence against these men. When I consider the natural gradations



dations by which they are led to adopt a course of conduct, as dishonourable to themselves as ruinous to the *Company* and to the public; when I trace their actions through the antecedent process of example, operating on young and pliant minds; indignation at the effect is partly lost in regretting the cause. For it is not surprizing that youth, withdrawn from the tuition of parents and guardians, associating with the cool, insinuating, and *assimilating* natives of India, and entering into their lines of business; it is not surprizing that young men unacquainted with the world, should in these circumstances adopt the practice and rules not only of predecessors and colleagues in office, but also of all around them, whether Gentoos or Mahomedans. The young men that afterwards become the governors of Hindostan, generally set out for that country with ideas of acquiring wealth; which ideas, being nourished not only by example, but advice and exhortation, soon grow up into the predominant passion of  
the



the heart, and ruling principle of the mind, which at last, in too many instances, become insensible to every human feeling, and too frequently even dead to the demands of common justice. Thus, my friend, I do not so much arraign the servants of the Company (for their conduct is that of human nature placed in certain circumstances) as I blame the impolicy of the British legislature, for not having established in India, an order of affairs, at once more politic and more virtuous.

FOR, however indulgent we may be to human weakness, Are persons, educated in the manner I have described, capable of improving the morals of the people, or of giving stability to government? Are they likely to render the natives contented and happy in the secure enjoyment of the fruits of industry, whether in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce, either by their precepts or example, or by an impartial administration of justice?

THAT



THAT the advantages of India are not cultivated to that extent of improvement of which they are capable, I have ascribed not to any negligence of the *Hindoos*, but to that of the Europeans sojourning among them: and I think with good reason. For the natives of Hindostan cultivated, and abundantly possessed, all the necessaries and luxuries that were adapted to their customs, and consistent with their religious tenets. Their soil, their climate, their ingenuity, but above all, their perseverance, were equal to every undertaking that did not require very great bodily strength. But why introduce new kinds of pleasure? why create new wants? They never knew a desire beyond the unvaried custom of their ancestors for ages past, until European avarice, and ambition, taught them the necessity of securing to themselves some degree of happiness, by satiating the rapacity of strangers with such new commodities as were pointed out to their native ingenioufness.



THE Company's pretensions to dominion, and their exclusive privilege of internal trade in India, extend from Cape Comorin in the tenth, to the twenty-ninth degree of North latitude, and over a space from east to west, on an average, of eight hundred miles; besides their possessions on the coasts of Guzarat and Malabar. The temperature of the climate, seldom, and not long, intensely hot, but never cold; the loose, genial, vegetative particles of the soil, which may receive additional fertility from inundations that are always at command, as well as from numerous herds of horned cattle and sheep; the consequent low price of labour; the wise political establishments of *Castes*, or tribes; the persevering ingenuity of the natives; certain institutions calculated to promote population \*: these are circumstances

\* As the Gentoo religion admits not of converts from other religions, and easily discards unworthy members from the number of its own votaries, the whole sect of the Gentoos must have been long ago extinct, if their



circumstances which render *Hindostan*, of all countries in the earth, the fittest for that singular species of commerce, which will allow the lord-paramount to export its copious redundancy without violating justice, offending industry, or impoverishing the people; provided that government take care, that a necessary proportion of money, or other authentic currency, be constantly kept in circulation, to prevent a stagnation in the commerce of the inhabitants with merchants, manufactures, and each other. The soil, aided by the climate, nightly dews, and alternate rains and sun-shine, doth now yield, almost spontaneously, rich crops of rice and other grains, twice, and sometimes thrice, every year. It is capable of producing abundantly, and of superior qualities, the sugarcane, indigo-shrub, cocoa-tree, coffee-tree,

their political sagacity had not established an effectual remedy against depopulation, by an indispensable obligation to marry their children when infants; who must consummate as soon as they arrive at the age of puberty.



cotton-tree, and all the fruits, roots, and vegetables peculiar to the tropics in the western hemisphere, as well as most of the common grains of Europe, and wheat in great abundance. It is computed, that the Company's territories under the presidency of Bengal, may be divided into three equal parts : one third part is under cultivation ; another, having been abandoned by the human inhabitants flying from oppression, has grown up into woods, and become a receptacle for tygers, leopards, wolves, buffaloes, and elephants ; and the remaining part is occupied by rivers, canals, lakes, and morasses. It is also computed, that the native inhabitants are *yet* in number from twelve to fifteen millions, and that the redundancy of their labours and ingenuity, exported annually, is equal to 2,500,000 l. sterling. Thus it is easy to calculate what the population and production would be, if the abandoned parts were again inhabited and cultivated. Nor will it be difficult to form a pretty accurate estimate of what would be the population,



lation, productions, and redundancy of the whole, under a wise and just system of government, that should encourage such improvements as, with the consent of the natives, should be introduced by Europeans of judgment and experience.

WERE the abandoned parts of the Company's territories in Bengal to be again inhabited, it is evident from the simple rule of proportion, that the population would be from 24 to 30 millions, and the exports 5,000,000 l: and the encrease of population and improvement (in case of such a political revolution as I have just now supposed) by additional manufactures and agriculture, may be estimated, on a moderate computation, at one third part more, making the whole population 35 millions, and the annual redundant exports 6,666,666 l.

THE Company's territorial possessions  
and virtual dominion on the coast of Co-



romandel, Golconda, and Orixá, under the presidency of Madras, are capable of receiving much higher improvement, and consequently of yielding in proportion a greater redundancy of labour for the advancement of commerce: because, although the natives of these coasts are infinitely more refined in their manners, more just in their dealings, and more tractable in their nature, than the natives of Bengal, as being less superstitious, they have hitherto been forced to submit to severer scourges and more outrageous injustice \*. From this cursory view,

\* The *Northern Circars* also, under a judicious system of government, and under permanent and encouraging tenures, might prove an admirable source of population, wealth, and general security. That part of the Decan never flourished in its full glory since the Mogul Tartars acquired the sovereignty of Hindostan; because, having been amongst the last of the countries of that peninsula which were effectually subdued, it was a continual subject of contention among court favourites and usurpers.

When the *Northern Circars* were ceded by *Salabat Jung* to the French in 1753, they yielded a revenue exceeding 500,000 l. and they were capable of yielding near  
double



view, I think it sufficiently appears that Britain has not derived those advantages in fact, which from the kindest soil, the most temperate climate, and the most ingenious, docile people in the world, might have been reasonably expected. But it is not perhaps too bold to go farther. A right improvement of the British acquisitions in India, is a more important object to this nation than the subjugation of the North Americans; an object on which so many millions of treasure have been expended, and to which so many thousands of lives have been sacrificed.

WEALTH, power, and dominion, are often acquired by good fortune; but to preserve them is the province of political sagacity. Greater glory, as well as greater advantage, is to be acquired by retaining and improving, than by extending con-

double that amount, besides capital advantages in the way of trade; but they have declined gradually since, as well in revenue and manufactures as in population.



quests. Let Britain seriously consider the truth of these maxims in the present moment. The nations of Europe had long viewed the profession of a merchant as ignominious : it was a degradation not only from nobility but from the rank of a gentleman ; and excluded men of the most exemplary probity and public spirit, who were in the practice of trade, from all societies above the contemptuous denomination of *Bourgeois* ; while even a strolling actor preserved the rank and dignity of illustrious birth and family. But experience, and the progress of knowledge, have dispelled those absurd prejudices. The most haughty monarchies in Europe, beholding, with astonishment and with dread, the rapid growth of small states by the genial influences of those sacred sisters, Industry, Commerce, and Freedom, endeavour to excite in their dominions, by means of wise institutions and public encouragements, a general emulation in Trade, which they no longer disdain to acknowledge as the mother of arts, the foun-



tain of wealth, and the protectress of power.—But of all branches of traffic, that with India, is, to an European people, the most advantageous. The nation that ingrosses this commerce, centres in itself that of the world: for it not only comprehends those articles which form the balance of trade, but also many other commodities, which it can furnish on such low terms as will lessen the value of labour at home, and thereby reduce the price of the necessaries of life. The low prices of provisions and cloathing, and consequent low price of labour, the superstitious observance of religious tenets, and singular prejudices of *Casts* in their food and affociations; with other circumstances which it is unnecessary to enumerate, and some of which I have already hinted, conspire to render the raw materials as well as the manufactures of India, so amazingly cheap, that by a wise, political establishment, the manufactures of Britain might be so effectually improved, and other commodities imported in British vessels on



such easy terms, that England would be enabled to undersell all the markets in Europe, and that LONDON would become the grand emporium of the world.

I am, &c.

LETTER



LETTER XXIX.

To J—— M——, Esq; London.

Calcutta, 25th Sept. 1779.

A LETTER from Europe, my friend, to a person residing in India, is a greater cordial than one from India to an inhabitant of Europe. In all our peregrinations, our imaginations still hover, with filial affection, over our native soil; the love of which is never so strongly felt as in foreign countries. Your kind enquiries, your information with respect to the various particulars in which you know me to be interested, and your public news, afford a refreshment, of which my present state of anxiety and suspense stands much in need.

LONG and expensive sufferings in a tedious passage hither, interrupted by many



untoward and painful accidents; the unsettled state of this government, which prevents both parties from serving their friends, except a few *singular* favourites, on whom a *singular* party bestows the Company's treasures in great profusion; in one word, the disappointment of all my views, inclines me to think of returning to Europe. On this subject I have not yet come to any final determination. But if I shall be forced, after so much wandering, to bend my course homeward at last, I flatter myself, that a voyage which has proved unprofitable and injurious to myself, will not be wholly useless to my country. My free intercourse with men of business, of observation, and political knowledge, in circumstances which disposed them to be not a little communicative\*, together with what I have seen or learnt in this country and elsewhere, has enabled me, if I mistake not, to offer to the consideration of men

\* On ship-board on a long voyage, where fellow-passengers are generally unreserved, and where they often enter into mutual friendship.



in power in Britain, certain hints, which may lead them into enquiries that may be productive of the greatest public benefits.

YOUR accounts relative to the American war, to one who knows *America* so well as I do, and who is so well acquainted as I am with many of its inhabitants, would be highly interesting, even if I were not concerned for the welfare of Britain. You dwell with rapture on *British valour*, which certainly never shone with brighter lustre than in the present contest with the Colonies. But while I glory in the spirit of my countrymen, I regret the cause in which it is now exerted, and see more matter of grief than of triumph in all their victories.—I admire the intrepidity and military skill of Colonel *Campbell*; but what I contemplate, *without a mixture of pain*, is, his moderation, clemency, and humanity. His victory \* was neither stained by an unnecessary effusion of blood,

\* Savannah, November 1778.



nor degraded by present or subsequent cruelty.

You desire to know what I *now* think of the struggle between Great Britain and her Colonies? What I thought from the beginning of that struggle I think still: a speedy accommodation of all differences appears to me to be equally the interest of both parties.

THAT this is the interest of Britain, will not, I apprehend, require much proof. A loss of men, an encrease of taxes, a decay of commerce, inculcate on England, in the most forcible manner, peace with America. Taxes cannot possibly be multiplied *ad infinitum*. Those ideas of *infinity* that are so familiar, and so innocent in the mouths of *metaphysicians*, in the practice of life and business are both false and pernicious. The time *will come*, and if the American war be continued, is perhaps not very *remote*, when Britain will be obliged to follow the discreditable example  
of



of France, in reducing, without ceremony, the interest of her immense debt, and diminishing the intrinsic value of her current coins.

THERE are not wanting many reasons which, on the other hand, urge the Americans to an accommodation with Britain. Of these, some are felt, and others may be foreseen. The devastations, and horrors, and miseries of a country which is the seat of war, must render peace, on safe and honourable terms, an object of all others the most desirable. But what terms are safe and honourable? that is the question. These, it would seem, the leaders of the colonists think inseparably connected with independency on the mother country. I am of a contrary opinion. I do not say that Great Britain is able to conquer North America; but I am confident that North America will not long maintain its independency on Britain, without falling into a dependency on some other power, or powers, of Europe.

FOR,



FOR, first; the large extent of her exposed coasts will require for their protection, a more absolute, compact, and vigilant power than that of a republic.

SECONDLY; the natural jealousies and unsettled pretensions of the several provinces, which are quashed for the present only by the incumbent pressure of a common enemy, will rebound with an elastic force when that weight shall be removed.

THIRDLY; that country, which from its infancy was nursed by the kind and indulgent aid of the parent state, which screened it from foreign invasion, and supported its civil and military establishments, must feel an alarming reverse of fortune when subjected to the taxes that will be unavoidably necessary for the support of the new government; for the defence of the coast; for the payment of the interest of the public debt; for the establishment of a military system, with fortifications; together with a navy, dock-yards,



yards, and ports. The taxation of America, it has been computed, under the British government, did not exceed one fixpence on the poll of the people: under the new system, it will amount, at the least, to forty shillings\*.

FOURTHLY; the produce of America, when exported indiscriminately to all the markets of Europe, will fall in its value, and return much less to the planter, than it did when circulated all over the world through the channel of Great Britain: because the merchants of that country to whom it was formerly consigned, by means

\* Britain was in the uniform practice of nursing the infant colonies with money, goods, credit, markets, and people. She expended in the last French war, ninety millions in the defence of America; and both before and since, continually bore the civil and military charges of government. The country bore only the minute expences of its internal police. The British nation now tax themselves with four millions annually, to pay the simple interest of their advances for the establishment and security of America: and America must have already contracted a public debt of at least thirty-five millions, at a rate of interest not under five per cent. per annum.

of



of their contiguity and mercantile knowledge, were able to judge of the state of markets ; while their large capitals and established credit enabled them to keep up the prices. But these advantages can have no place, when planters must sell off their goods at all adventures, ignorant themselves of the state of markets in the old world, and confiding in masters of vessels, still more ignorant ; when they are obliged to submit to the mercenary and subtle dispositions of foreigners, who have not, like the English, any natural attachment to them ; who have not any interest in procuring a fair market price, because they make no advances ; and, whatever they may take, give not any credit. Thus America, stript of that credit which enabled her to cultivate her waste lands, and to trade with ease, must now, by dint of labour and indefatigable industry, in straitened circumstances, and without the prospect of a certain mart, cultivate the lands, raise the commodities, and furnish ships for trans-



transportation, many months before they can expect a reimbursement.

FIFTHLY; France is too political to encourage the absolute independency of a country so extensive and flourishing as that of North America; for that independency might involve in its consequences, an uncontrollable dominion over the trade of *all* America, Asia, and Africa, and the impoverishment of all Europe; events, which the policy of the most enlightened nation of Europe would alone study to prevent, even if we could suppose all the other powers of that division of the globe so infatuated as to regard them with indifference. The views of France, therefore, can be no other than to take advantage of the unhappy contest between Britain and her Colonies, to humble the power of her proud rival, and by the same means to reduce America to so low a pitch, as to render her an easy prey to be divided among the maritime powers of Europe, retaining, as her own share, the most valuable



able provinces, Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas. This, doubtless, is the object of the policy of France. America, say the politicians of that country, must be enabled to resist the power of Britain, until both countries are so effectually exhausted, that Britain shall cease to be, in trade and naval power, even the rival of France, and that America shall look up to her allies alone for protection; and then France will acquire an ascendancy over America, more absolute and despotic than if it were a French colony. This plan was suggested by the Duke de Choiseul, during his administration, and he has continued to recommend and urge it, *since* he quitted the helm of state. He sent out a Monsieur Boileau, a man of great political talents and address, to foment the rebellion in America in its very first appearances, by preaching a doctrine exploded in his own country, the natural rights of mankind; by holding up to the imaginations of discontented and turbulent men, the dazzling glories of independency, and by well-timed



timed, gilded assurances from the grand monarque. Yet it is certain, notwithstanding all this, that if France had not received certain information that Britain was well disposed to accommodate matters with America, at the conclusion of the year 1777 (in consequence of which Dr. Franklin protested, that unless France would immediately declare in favour of America, her cause would be lost) the interposition of the *grand monarque* would have continued under a political veil for a campaign or two longer. The treacherous and dastardly conduct of Count D'Estaing's fleet, shews clearly that it is not yet the intention of France to enter heartily into the cause of the Americans, because they are not sufficiently reduced in money and power, tamely to bend their necks to that yoke which their allies have long been preparing for them.

SIXTHLY ; taxes *beyond a certain amount*, cannot be borne by any species of *internal* industry known to mankind. High taxes



can be supported only by that kind of commerce which imports from foreign states a balance in the precious metals. Whatever taxes are raised beyond such as are necessary for defraying the *current* expences of government, and that are imposed for the purpose of paying the interest of an accumulated or funded debt, are detrimental to all countries, but to those that depend solely on colonization and agriculture, are absolutely ruinous.

IN new settlements, fertility of soil, and the low value of lands, awaken an ambition in almost every man, of becoming an independent farmer or planter. He forsakes the occupation of a manufacturer, and the service of others, and becomes, on his own account, a cultivator of new soils. Hence the price of labour rises above the value of those articles on which it is bestowed; and the wants of citizens, as well as of landholders, are supplied by the importation of different commodities from strangers, subject to certain duties: and



and as all taxes do ultimately fall upon lands, if labour is burthened with a public claim chargeable *directly* upon the land and its productions, and that both the internal and imported manufactures are also taxed in a proportionate degree; the sum of the whole becomes considerably more than a triple tax upon agriculture; because each individual who pays the original tax, claims both an interest and a profit upon the previous advances, agreeably to the laws and principles of trade. These taxes will be grievously felt by those who were accustomed to pay only six-pence per head. Instead of one six-pence, the exigencies of the new government will call, as I have already observed, for eighty six-pences. If Holland, Venice, Genoa, and the Hans-Towns, whose forms of government are wholly or partly republican, had possessed territories of so spacious an extent as to have made agriculture a capital object, they must have perished the moment when richer powers became rivals in their trade.



SEVENTHLY; America will see her new settlements abandoned, her country depopulated, her navigation and commerce ruined, and her provinces a subject of perpetual contention to Europe. France will become the object of her jealousy and detestation; and she will at last be convinced, that her true happiness consists in a re-union with the parent state.

THE Americans seem to tread in the foot-steps of Cromwell and his puritanical adherents in the reign of King Charles I. If they do become independent, their republican, or more properly their democratical government will not, in all probability, be of long continuance. People of condition, character, and sense, will not long endure the insolence, abuses, and depredations of upstarts, at the heads of armies, and in the departments of power. Their resentment against the parent state, no longer inflamed by the severities of war, will gradually cool. Their passions will subside, and yield to the dispassionate voice of  
of



of reason, which will unite them in a resolution to take up arms for the purpose of restoring, on improved and permanent principles, that original form of government which connected them with Great Britain.

Thus, my friend, have I delivered my sentiments concerning the probable issue of that melancholy controversy which disturbs every quarter of the world. I believe it will terminate as family quarrels commonly do, in a sincere reconciliation between the contending parties, and in as sincere a detestation of those malicious intermeddlers who fanned the flame of discord. It were to be wished, in the present crisis, that every branch of the house of Bourbon would call to mind that magnanimous declaration of the Emperor Charles V. when solicited by his ministers to accept the offers of those provinces of France which had revolted against his inveterate enemy Henry II. Though that prince had every motive to accept those



offers, which ambition, jealousy, and revenge could oppose to sentiments of moderation and justice, he yet rejected them.—

“ I behold, said he, the revolt of subjects against their sovereign with such horror, that I would cheerfully assist my greatest enemy to reduce them to subjection.” To the recollection of America, I would recall the manner in which *Spain* was reduced from a state of the highest prosperity to be a Roman province. That ancient nation, with equal ingratitude and folly, joined her arms to those of Rome, for the purpose of humbling Carthage, her ally by the ties of commerce, and of mutual intercourse and hospitality. Carthage was overthrown in the unequal contest: but Spain, reduced to the most humiliating state of servitude to her powerful allies, more powerful than ever by the ruin of her rival, paid dear for her impolitic conduct. America should likewise remember, that the Mexican empire was not subverted by the power of *Cortez*, but by an unnatural confederacy of powerful *caziques*,



ziques and tribes with the Spaniards, against their own Emperor. Intending only to make themselves less dependent on their sovereign, by reducing his power, they loaded themselves and their wretched posterity with perpetual slavery. — *Peru* would never have been conquered by all the efforts of *Pizarro* and his associates, had not the two contending *Incas* severally invited the arms of the *Spaniard* to overthrow his brother.

I am, &c. &c.



## LETTER XXX.

To J—— M——, Esq;

Calcutta, Sept. 28, 1779.

I KNOW not whether it would not have been better policy to have colonized Hindostan than North America. America was raised to its present state of grandeur and power, from lofty woods and from deserts, by the natives of Britain, whose industry was encouraged by a liberal and profuse expenditure of British treasure, and protected by an unwearied support, against the ravages of foreign and intestine enemies: and in order to give the colonists secure and unmolested possession of the territories they occupied, it became a leading principle in English policy, to exterminate that savage race of men who inherited a property in the soil from nature. But Hindostan was a country under  
rich



rich cultivation, flourishing in stately cities, extensive villages, and immense wealth; inhabited by a numerous and learned people, highly accomplished in manners, sciences, arts, and jurisprudence. A country peopled with such inhabitants, is an acquisition infinitely greater than any extent of unpeopled territory whatever. To make the acquisition complete, it is only necessary to make the people happy, by a mild system of government adapted to their manners, customs, and educations. Whatever might have been thought, of the comparative importance of colonizing North America or Hindostan before the eruption of the present civil war, I think it is not to be doubted at this moment, when we consider the present state and future prospect of affairs in America, that India is a more inviting scene to British valour, industry, and art. I have in my last letter given you my reasons for thinking, that if the Americans were left in possession of independency, they would soon seek for a reconciliation with the  
parent



parent state, as the sure and only means of escaping from the miseries of internal convulsion and foreign dominion. Turn your views then, my countrymen, from the west to the east; from the *setting* to the *rising* sun. Here is a wide field for every exertion of genius, and effort of courage. Here there is ample scope for speculation, whether of an abstracted or less refined but more profitable kind: and here you may fight, on advantageous ground, the natural enemies of Britain! Thus it is probable that you may regain your old, and thus it is certain you may raise new colonies.

AN encrease of people would encourage an encrease of grain, provisions, and cloathing. In proportion to this would be the encrease of raw materials and manufactured commodities for exportation; which raw materials and manufactured commodities would prove a plentiful source of wealth to the English East India Company



pany and the British nation. Hence the riches of Europe would flow, by a natural attraction, into the narrow seas; since no other country in the world can afford to sell their labour so cheap as the Hindoos, the most temperate, persevering, and ingenious of all the sons of men.

A COUNTRY so extensive and fertile as Hindostan, that produces two or three crops in the year, is capable of furnishing more provisions of all sorts, than double the present population could consume; and at the same time, of continuing still to yield more silk, cotton, opium, and salt-petre, than the power of an exclusive company will be able to export for the consumption of Europe, or than private traders convened in the other parts of Asia, and the Persian and Arabian gulphs. Spacious allotments of land might be made to individuals, without any injury whatever to commerce, or the general interests of the community. From a system of colonization, the greatest benefits would  
arise



arise to the country of Hindostan ; and an inexhaustible source of wealth, as well as a new and secure channel of private and public remittances, would be opened to Great Britain.

COLONIZATION will prove the best means of recovering and re-cultivating the deserted lands, where opulent cities, populous villages, and high cultivation, once gave life and contentment to millions. The industry of colonists will drain many of those marshy tracts of country, the richness of which will abundantly compensate that labour ; while security will thus be provided to both people and cattle against those fierce destructive animals with which the depopulated parts of Hindostan are at present infested. The melancholy progress of the Sugar-Ants \* in the

\* The West India Sugar-Ants, which are so destructive to canes, were introduced, it is alledged, in mold or dung brought over from Demerara into Barbadoes by Godfrey Clarke, Esq; father of the late Mr. Clarke of that island. They have a most voracious appetite for canes, but destroy  
nothing



the West Indies, seems to threaten the utter destruction of that commodity in the  
Western

nothing else, except cattle, and sometimes children.— They attack the stalk and fibres of the canes in the ground, and thus consume its juices, until it decays. They are a very small species of ants, streaked brown and white, having a kind of down over the body, and an acid taste. They dig, if there is soil to permit, several feet deep into the earth, they march in a straight course, and in regular procession; in the nights, mornings, and evenings, and during the intense heat of the sun burrow in the earth, or under some other shade, carrying their young in their mouths; they avoid entering upon land newly turned up, preferring always the beaten track, and shun ashes if strewed in the way; no fire or water will alter their destination, or stop their progress; they will extinguish a fire by the millions which perish upon it, to pave a passage for the main body; and they watch the bank of a river, till a log of wood, or any other piece or branch of timber crosses between the opposite sides, of which they instantly make a bridge, and transport themselves, continuing their route until they come to a sugar plantation, where they set themselves down, until it is demolished. Thus their motion and progress is very slow. It has been computed, that it will require near an equal number of slaves to resist the destruction of the ants on a plantation, as all the other operations thereof, if the soil and other requisites are naturally good.—From Barbadoes they were first communicated to Martinico, in packages of goods and provisions; and  
they



Western hemisphere. At any rate, this pest, by the expence of that labour which  
is

they were brought from Barbadoes to a plantation of Mr. Clark's in Granada, whence they spread to those immediately adjoining, in the course of ten years.—A smuggler from Martinico, in revenge for an injury, brought them in a large bottle from Martinico to the plantation of a French gentleman on the other side of the island, which the owner wisely sold as soon as he could, to Mess. Bosanquet and Fatro in London. From these two plantations, they have extended to several neighbouring estates. In like manner they were brought to Tobago from Barbadoes. And from Martinico they have been conveyed to St. Lucia, Gaudaloupe, Granadines, and to one plantation only in Dominica.—Various methods have ineffectually been tried to destroy them. Their senses are so acute, that in whatever method poison is administered, they will quickly discern its pernicious effects, and avoid it. The inhabitants of the French islands of Granada and Tobago, have offered, by ordinances and laws, premiums, exceeding (in the whole) 100,000 l. for the discovery of an effectual mode to eradicate or destroy them.

The sagacity or instinct of the Sugar-Ants will cease to be an object of wonder, when we attend to the astonishing discoveries which have lately been made by Mr. Smeathman concerning the Ants called TERMITES.

The TERMITES has generally been reckoned an Ant, and has gone by that general name in our books of natural history; but upon examination, we find the figure of the animals materially different, as well as their way of life.

The



is necessarily employed in resisting it, will, in all probability, raise the price of sugar to

The first state of the Termites is that of labourers; they then become foldiers; in this their bulk is increased, and they become quite useless for all the purposes of labour; in their last stage they get wings, which, however, soon fall off, when they become a prey to the fowls, or the inhabitants of the country, who reckon them excellent food. It is from among these that the queen is chosen by a body of wandering labourers. In the state we describe, they are very small, not exceeding in size the common ant of this country. This is the state of existence in which they perform their chief operations, and it is in this they are to be considered as most perfect, as in it they fulfil all the purposes of their existence.—Like the Ant, these animals assemble in large societies, where every individual not only obeys the laws, but contributes his share to supply the necessities or conveniencies of the whole body. The working-Termites in this state is called by Mr. Smeathman, the labourers, for they build the habitations and perform the other laborious offices of the society. These labourers, like the working-bees, are neither male nor female; which seems, in both cases, a wise regulation in nature. Love, which creates so many divisions amongst the more solitary animals, would quite interrupt the necessary duties of such an extensive republic. As their hearts are affected by no impulse but the general good, the common offices are formed with regularity and care. Besides these labourers there is another kind of Termites, much larger, which carry a forceps as an offensive weapon; these gentlemen oversee



to such a height, that other countries must be resorted to for its cultivation. The  
search

see the labourers at work, and protect the habitation from the insults of other animals; on this account they are called by Mr. Smeathman the soldiers. As far as we know, these have no other use, for they can neither work nor propagate their species. The queen, from whose prolific body all the others arise, is next to be considered: She originally enjoyed no superiority over the other female Termites, who in a certain state, like the bees, leave their habitations in search of others; but by chance, with many of her companions, she is met by a body of wandering labourers, who immediately elect her out of the multitude for their sovereign, while the rest are left to wander till they are picked up by the inhabitants, or by other animals. The queen so chosen is put into the royal apartment, which is about the middle of the habitation. This room is fitted to her size, arched above, with a plane surface below. In order to impregnate her majesty, several males are chosen by the workers, and shut up along with her: the other males that remain are expelled the society, or put to death as a burden altogether unnecessary. So far will sound policy conquer humanity in other breasts than ours. — Having given some idea of the labourers, the soldiers, the queen, and her males, it will next be proper to say something of their astonishing habitations. These are very common in Africa, the West-India islands, Brasil, and other parts of South America. They are of very different sizes, according to their age, the state of the republic, and other circumstances: their height is often in-  
considerable,



search is over. The country is already in our possession, of which the sugar-plant is a native,

considerable, tho' frequently they are found to rise in a conical figure, to no less than fourteen, sixteen, or even eighteen feet, with a base in good proportion to the other parts. If we compare their bulk to that of men, how vastly superior must we allow such a building to be to any of our greatest works!—Shall we still say, that those hands which collected and formed, prepared and applied such proper materials, were moved by instinct alone? that those heads which could direct such an immense work, which could vary it as circumstances were changed, which could alter it with the nature of the ground, and repair every injury in the shortest and best manner—shall we say that those heads were illuminated with no rays of reason; that they could not reflect or compare, compound or decompound their ideas?—These buildings are composed of earthy parts, united in such a manner with vegetable juices, that the compound exactly resembles a stone. When several of such happen to be united, the mass so formed is very considerable; and it is common to see the cattle ascend them, to view what is going on in the distant country. This they can do without the least injury to the buildings, so hard and well-formed they are in all those parts where injuries might be received. The ingenious Mr. Smeathman has first given a proper account of the internal structure of these buildings, which was difficult to be done, if we consider the hardness of their walls, and the bravery of the soldiers who defend them. He says, that upon first offering any violence to the structure, a few soldiers make their appearance, who run about with every mark of



a native, and where the expence of raising and converting it into sugar, will be so far

anxiety and rage in search of the aggressor: more troops soon appear, till at length the whole multitude is in commotion. They assail the enemy with their forceps, and will kill the largest animals that persist in offending them. When their enemy has disappeared, they carefully examine the injury they have sustained; the labourers immediately collect materials to repair the damage: while they are at work, a soldier is set over them, who now and then makes a sort of shrill noise, which continues some seconds; when this commences, the workmen who were beginning to turn languid in their operations, with one soul increase their effort, till fatigue again requires another stimulus.—In the same way our sailors are animated with their mutual shouts; and I suppose for the same reason, the oxen move with greater alacrity by the plowman's whistle, or the Italian mule with his bell.—The most remarkable part of the inner building, is the room where the queen is lodged: she is put in here at first no larger than a common ant, but after being impregnated, her body swells to a much greater size, while the head still remains as before. An old queen will often be an inch or more in circumference, with length in proportion, so that we find her apartment increased to a diameter of several inches, with a suitable height. From this room there are several passages for her attendants, which communicate with a vast number of cells that surround it. These domestics, to the number of many thousands, are employed in nothing but waiting on the queen. Some of them bring her food, while the rest are sufficiently employed



far below that which attended its culture in the West Indies, that after allowing a generous

employed in carrying away the ova which she continually deposits, to the cells already mentioned. These offices are absolutely necessary, for there is no passage left sufficiently large to let the queen out of her room, where she remains constantly from her first entrance. The number of ova which a queen will deposit in a minute, exceeds all belief. As the bulk of this chamber is small in proportion to the number of domestics it always contains, and as some of them are going from the entrances to the queen, while others are moving in a contrary direction, great confusion might be occasioned, did they not wisely avoid it, by forming themselves into a spiral troop, so that every one before he can arrive at the door from the queen, must describe the whole line. The nursery which surrounds the queen's chamber, is made up of a vast number of cells for the reception of the ova, where they are deposited by the queen's attendants. In the walls of the buildings, there is a kind of covered way formed, by which the inhabitants ascend to the top of it, or to any height they may incline; as they cannot adhere to a surface like a fly, they have inclined this passage at a convenient angle for walking. This communicates with the other cells, rooms, or passages, so that the whole body can on any emergency transfer themselves to any part.

The numerous tribes of the animals we have been describing, were not surely made to answer no end, or as some have been tempted to imagine, only to answer a bad



generous freight equal to time, distance, and other circumstances, it will abundantly compensate the planter, and yield a most beneficial remittance.

one. It is true, the planter in the West-Indies is often nearly ruined by the ravages they make—premiums have been offered for a method to destroy these destructive ants, as they are called. Vegetable substances, when once deprived of the principle of life, are sure to be attacked by them, if in the neighbourhood of their edifices, from which they make excursions in hollow ways, formed of the same materials with their other works. They will reduce a house almost to powder in a few hours, by perforating, in a thousand directions, the timber that covers and supports it. Mr. Smeathman says, that he has seen a chest with its contents, in a short time so pierced and eaten with these insects, that it retained its former figure, though little of either its original weight or substance. In Africa, the houses are very frequently entirely carried away, and every thing in them.

But these animals also produce good effects, by reducing to earth, the vegetable substances which arise so fast and in such quantities in that luxuriant soil. Putridity, when in conjunction with moisture and heat, is known to cause fevers of the worst sort in the equatorial countries. Without the Termites, the Musquettoes, which also prevent this putridity, and other animals of the like kind, we may venture to assert, that a large proportion of the habitable world would be quite unfit for the purposes of animal, or perhaps vegetable life.

EVERY



EVERY species of improvement, which affords liberal encouragement to labour and industry, will tend to retain the natives at home, and operate as a *voluntary* barrier against emigration. By introducing a new branch of commerce, it will retain annually above 250,000 l. sterling in circulation, which is now sent in specie to pay for sugar and arrack to the Dutch in Batavia, for the consumption of Bengal, and the coasts of Coromandel, Malabar, and Guzarat; and contribute to render the whole country less dependent on foreigners for common supplies.

THE indigo shrub is also a native of this country; and the quality of its indigo, under the disadvantage of a total ignorance of the proper method of manufacturing it, shews what it is capable of being made by due management. The exportation of this commodity to Britain, will be more beneficial in every respect to the exporter and planter than the sugar;

U 3 besides



besides that it will render the British manufacturer less dependent for that necessary article on North America, France, and Spain. As to cocoa, it may be raised in the plains of Hindostan in such quantities and at so small an expence, as to annihilate the balance which the consumption of chocolate creates against Britain in the scale of trade. The soil and climate of India, together with the persevering assiduity of the natives, applying themselves according to their respective families, to distinct or particular branches of labour, seem naturally adapted to the culture of the cochineal insect. If no fortunate casualty in politics shall put the British nation in possession of the island of Ceylon\* (a spot not more desirable for the vast wealth

\* When this letter was written, Britain was at peace with Holland.—The late rupture between these nations, has opened immense prospects to England, by the conquest of the island of Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope.



it yields, than for its position and harbour, so excellently adapted for the protection of a navy at all seasons, and consequently for the defence of all India) the southern parts of the Carnatic, which have already some, are capable of producing abundance of cinnamon of the very best quality. In short, it were vain to attempt an enumeration of the various articles of subsistence and of trade, which the famed peninsula of HINDOSTAN is capable of yielding to a liberal and wise guardian, in cattle, flocks, grain, cloths, salts, ores, drugs, gums, &c. &c. Industry and common understanding, with the protection of person and property, would undoubtedly make it again what the Orientalists stiled it of old, *The Paradise of Nations*.

INDIA, restored to a resemblance of what it was, will open its rich sluices, and with a strong attractive power, draw, in barter for its commodities, such supplies of precious metals from European, African, and Asiatic nations, that the credit



of the protecting power will co-operate with the grateful feelings of a happy people, to give effectual currency to bank-notes in circulation : whence a new fund of solid gain will flow into the Company's, and thence into the national treasure. — But to give the greatest possible encouragement to general industry, for the improvement of agriculture, and for the promotion of manufactures and commerce, a general bank should be established, with a treasury and mint, on a new and extensive scale, and upon liberal principles, equally useful to the country and to the proprietors. In order to shew the happy consequences arising from a free and easy use of money, in the country of which I now speak, let me mention an anecdote which I heard from a Mr. Wood (with whom I happened accidentally to be in company) a free merchant of *Decca*. — Mr. Wood, coming from *Decca* to *Calcutta* through a large tract of uncultivated and marshy woods, which renders that navigation both tedious and dangerous, chanced to fall in with



with a poor native wood-cutter. In the course of conversation, the poor man said, that if he had but fifty rupees (five pounds) he could make a comfortable settlement. The fifty rupees Mr. Wood lent him. When Mr. Wood, after staying some time at Calcutta, returned to *Decca*, he saw the effects of his bounty in an advanced settlement on a small eminence, newly cleared from standing trees. Unsolicted, he lent the wood-cutter fifty rupees more. The next voyage, Mr. Wood was delighted to behold the rapid progress of the settlement, and astonished to meet the wood-cutter offering to repay half the small but generous loan. Mr. Wood refused to receive it at that time, and lent one hundred rupees more. About eighteen months after the commencement of the settlement, Mr. Wood had the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing his poor wood-cutter at the head of five populous villages, and a spacious tract of fine land under cultivation, drained and cleared of swamps and woods. The wood-cutter repayed the principal



principal of the small sum he had borrowed, and tendered the interest, while tears of gratitude and humble affection, trickled down his venerable but smiling countenance.

LETTER



LETTER XXXI.

To J—— M——, Esq; London.

Calcutta, 1st October, 1779.

**I**N this celebrated land, so abundant in objects of curiosity, a stranger is particularly struck with customs, manners, and opinions, whose origin lies buried in the depths of an unfathomable antiquity. But the most striking features in the character of the *Hindoos*, are their superstition, and veneration for the institutions and tenets of their forefathers. In India, the dominion of religion extends to a thousand particulars, which in other countries are governed either by the civil laws, or by taste, custom, or fashion. Dress, food, the common intercourses of life, marriages, professions, all are under the jurisdiction of religion. There is scarcely any thing  
which



which is not regulated by superstition. It prescribes rules of conduct in all circumstances and situations; nor is there any thing almost so trifling or minute as to be considered as a matter of indifference. The original government of the Hindoos, was in reality an hierarchy; for among that religious people, the highest authority was possessed by the priesthood, or the Brahmin *cast*, a tribe of priests like that of *Levi* among the Jews. Nor is it in this instance only, that we find a resemblance between the natives of India and that singular people I have just now mentioned. Not only were the governments of both nations hierarchical, but in both there was a vast variety of religious observances and ceremonies extending to many particulars, which in other countries are matters of choice or of indifference; and both entertained the most profound respect and veneration for their ancestors.

In European nations there is a love of novelty, and an ardour of improvement, which



which leads to a contempt of past times, and an high estimation of the present. In Asia, particularly in India, both on this side and beyond the *Ganges*, there is a scrupulous tenacity of ancient customs and manners; and the object of emulation is, not to invent any thing new, but to preserve in their original purity, the usages and the doctrines of the most remote antiquity. I know not whether there be not a certain connexion between this disposition, and that turn which prevails in India, not towards invention or design, but to imitation. In arts of this last kind, the Hindoos are so dextrous, that the original model is not to be distinguished from the new production, in any kind of cloth, earth, metal, wood, or stone. For works of imitation, their nature seems peculiarly fitted, by that patient perseverance which so eminently distinguishes them; and by another quality, if it be another, which is, that they are wholly occupied and absorbed in the present object. No distraction



tion of thought, no wandering of imagination : the force of their mind, by means of fixed attention, is brought to bear, as it were, against one place ; it is brought to a centre of percussion. And with all this perseverance and straining of attention, they preserve an evenness of spirits, which are never very much elevated but by the power of opium, or other intoxicating herbs, but never depressed by such labour as is suited to their bodily frames and constitutions. The tranquillity of their minds, even in the most trying circumstances, is expressed by a constant smile that sits gracefully on their placid countenances.

I HAVE often had occasion to animadvert on the partial and false notions entertained in Europe, that all other nations in the world are barbarians. Under the idea of heathenism, the Europeans comprehend barbarous customs, manners, and laws, and ideas unworthy of the attributes of the Supreme Being.—I confess, that in



my opinion, the charge of barbarism might justly be retorted on the arrogant natives of Europe, by most nations in the world. I have had occasion to see and to converse with various tribes of those nations that are denominated, not *barbarous*, but even *savage*, on the continent and in the islands of America, and have had accurate information concerning many nations in Africa. I have seen or had exact information of the principles and manners of many nations in Asia, and the Asiatic and African islands; and I have not a doubt in my mind, that the nations of Europe are more savage than any of all these; if by the term *savage*, I may be allowed to understand oppression, cruelty, and injustice. *That* people, in my mind, have the best title to the praise of civilization and refinement, who are the most humane, courteous, and just in the intercourses of social life. A nation may be possessed of an high degree of refinement in the arts and sciences, and with regard to the great art  
of



of life, which consists in the practice of virtue, may be mere barbarians \*. In Europe

\* Whether the progress of civilization contributes, on the whole, to the improvement of virtue and the advancement of happiness, is a question which has furnished of late an ample field of speculation. The greatest part of speculative reasoners, hesitate not to ascribe to the progress of science and of art, whatever is desirable, graceful, and noble in human life; while others decry this progress as the fertile source of infelicity, debasement, and corruption. This last opinion is generally considered as whimsical, although it has been maintained by the genius and pathetic eloquence of Rousseau. Indeed, it must be allowed, that on this head Rousseau is somewhat extravagant; although not so extravagant as those who represent mankind in the first stages of society, merely as animals roaming through woods and deserts in quest of prey, devoid of all fidelity, benevolent instinct, and social love.

The learned and sagacious author of *ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF MANKIND IN RUDE AND CULTIVATED AGES*, is of opinion, that here, as in many other cases, the truth will be found to lie between two extremes: and that the beneficial influence of the progress in question, “is real, yet far inferior to what the panegyrists of science and art have represented it to be; and just barely enough to reward that continual pursuit which it solicits from every nation once engaged in this career.”

The epithets *barbarous* and *civilized*, says the same ingenious advocate for the dignity of human nature, “occur



Europe, the progress of vice has kept pace with that of knowledge. If the people of the

so frequently in conversation and in books, that whoever employs his thoughts in contemplation of the manners and history of mankind, will have occasion to consider, with some attention, both what ideas these words are commonly meant to convey, and in what sense they ought to be employed by the historian, and moral philosopher.

“ It is of some importance surely, in every discussion relative to human affairs, to have ascertained before-hand, what are those qualities in the manners and characters of different nations, which, according to the estimation of reason, after an impartial survey of mankind, as they are and have been, may justify the imposition of names implying almost unlimited censure or applause.

“ Perhaps, on examination, it will not appear that any simple criterion of civilization and barbarity, taken either from laws, or manners, or any other circumstance in human affairs, can be fixed upon, as corresponding to the general use which is made of these terms, and fitted to explain their application in particular cases.

“ That civilization, so highly extolled, is plainly understood, by its admirers, to be somewhat of a mixed and complicated nature, comprehending various constituent parts, some essential to its very existence, some only accessory and ornamental. In the total absence of the former of these, *Barbarity*, according to the general acceptance of the word, seems to be understood to consist.



the east and west have refined in policy,  
and consequently degenerated from the  
original

“ Warm and steady affections in private life, an honourable fidelity to engagements, whether express or implied, the order of internal laws, equity and humanity in their conduct towards strangers, and foreign nations, will be insisted upon by all, as essential to the character of a civilized people. The sciences, and fine arts, though not indispensably essential, must be esteemed very requisite: yet is not their influence exempted from some uncertainty and suspicion. The cultivation of real science, the love and study of the fine arts, while uncorrupted, add, no doubt, to the politeness, and improve the enjoyments, of civilized nations; but an attachment to false sciences (several of which, like astrology and magic, unsuspected while they flourish, have prevailed, and perhaps prevail) or a passion for spurious and grotesque imitations of the fine arts, as pantomimes, puppet-shows, masquerades, or the laboured decoration of gardens and parterres, cannot improve, and may degrade, in a certain degree, the character of those nations by whom they are cherished.

“ The vulgar and commercial arts, subservient to the plenty, accommodation, and elegance of ordinary life, seem almost of an indifferent nature.

“ Although by these the manners of civilized nations may be embellished, yet the highest degrees of generous virtue, and the truest politeness of mind, may be found among nations to whom these arts are almost totally unknown.



original purity of their morals, they have done so from necessity. They found treachery,

“ If this be a full enumeration of the qualities which, in the general sense of mankind, are understood to constitute civilized manners, and a just account of their respective importance ; it deserves to be adverted to, that no nation has ever possessed them all in their highest excellence, nor has any subsisted as a people (short periods of convulsion and anarchy excepted) without a very considerable degree of one or more of those which are to be accounted most essential.

“ Were it not then better to set aside from correct reasoning, the too general terms of *barbarous* and *civilized*, substituting in their room expressions of more definite censure and approbation ?

“ Indeed the common acceptance of these words is founded upon a very general, but very false and partial opinion of the state of mankind. It supposes that the difference between one nation and another may be prodigiously great ; and some happy and distinguished tribes of men are, in all respects, generous, liberal, refined, and humane ; while others, from their hard fate, or their perverseness, remain in all respects illiberal, mischievous, and rude.

“ This general supposition with regard to the condition of human nature, is implied in that opinion of their own superiority over other nations, which Europeans are prone to entertain ; a superiority which, like that assumed by the Greeks, the Romans, and the Chinese, is supposed by those who claim it, to be absolute and immense ; yet, if brought to the standard of virtue and felicity, it may



308 TRAVELS *in*  
treachery, cunning, dissimulation, with other  
vices, necessary to secure their persons and  
property

appear very inconsiderable in respect of the populous Asiatic nations, who have flourished long under extensive monarchies; and not very great in respect even of the simplest and rudest race of men, inhabiting the frozen shores of Greenland, or placed beneath the fervour of a vertical sun, along the Guinea coast, or on the banks of the Orinoco.

“It ought to be supposed that, if other nations were as far inferior to us, as we are willing to imagine, their condition would evidently tend to decay and extermination. With regard to the inferior orders of being, both animal and vegetable, it seems to be a law of nature, that, wherever they cannot attain, in some very considerable degree, the honours, if I may so speak, and the emoluments of their existence, there they gradually decline, and at last cease to exist at all. Is man an exemption from the general law? or may it not rather be believed, that wherever any tribes of mankind subsist, and do not manifestly decay and hasten to extermination, there, though appearances belie it, they must have attained a measure of worth and of felicity not much inferior to that which the most admired nations have actually attained?

Dr. Dunbar gives the following natural, and I had almost said flattering account of the origin of civil society:

“With similar appetites and congenial passions, the excursions of individuals will often coincide. They will be found occasionally on the banks of the same river, or in the same corner of the grove. The reiterated appearance

of



property against the oppression and various machinations of emigrants from Europe.

ALL

of the objects slowly and imperceptibly calls forth new desires. Each interview has its effect. The brutality of the savage begins to vanish. Some refinement appears. An appetite for society ripens, which afterwards must be gratified as well as other appetites. Little plans are carried on in concert; and at a time when no discordant interests, or various pursuits, had diversified the scene, a small community might be kept together by the tie of sociability and reciprocal love.

In these days of envy, and of interest, we are little able to conceive its force; nor, if the feelings remained, could artificial language, in this respect, supply the language of nature. When similar functions and occupations in civil society prove so often a bond of union among those of the same order, how immense must have been the effect of an exact conformity of life! That resemblance of disposition and of character, which is the cement of little associations, and is the principle of private friendship, was the original basis of public union. The history of the Seldurii in Gaul, of the antient Germans, and of other public bodies, of which there are so many examples in the simple ages, evidences the stability of those sacred bonds and confederacies that originate in the heart. The history too of some of the South Sea isles, which the late voyages of discovery have tended to disclose, enables us to glance at society in some of its earlier forms, and to mark, in some striking examples, the inviolable fidelity of social love.

X 3 The



ALL history points to India as the mother of science and art. This country was anciently so renowned for knowledge and wisdom, that the philosophers of Greece did not disdain to travel thither for their improvement; and imported thence many notions, which they

"The principles of union are, in the order of things, prior to the principles of hostility. The former are, in truth, productive of the latter, which, in a more advanced period, bursting forth, like a torrent, against other tribes, disfigure the character of uncivilized nations."

Although this author steers a course between Rousseau on the one hand, and the *degrading* Dean of Gloucester on the other, yet it is evident that he approaches much nearer to the paths of the former than to those of the latter; for he admits, that the most improved and refined nations very little excel in felicity or worth the simplest and rudest tribes of men.—Nay, he says further, that, "our voyages of discovery, which in some respects are so honourable, and calculated for noble ends, have never yet been happy for any of the tribes of mankind visited by us."

It has been my fate in the course of a life full of vicissitudes and disappointments, to have visited many different nations in all the quarters of the world; and all that I have heard or seen, confirms the sentiments now quoted from the respectable author of *ESSAYS ON THE HISTORY OF MANKIND*.

incorporated



incorporated with their systems of philosophy. Pythagoras, Democritus, Anaxarchus, Pyrrho, Apollonius, and others, went to India in order to converse with the Brahmins of that country; whom, from the nature of their garments, which left a great part of their bodies uncovered, they called *gymno-sophists*, or the naked philosophers.

It appears, from the concurring testimony of ancient writers, that the Brahmins of India, about two thousand years ago, lived innocent, pure, and austere lives, abstaining from wine and animal food; and, as much as possible, from all sensual enjoyment. They shunned the contagious example of a world sunk in corruption, and endeavoured to shelter their feeble virtue by retirement in caves and woods, where they subsisted on the spontaneous productions of the earth.

THEIR moral principles were the most sublime that could be imagined. The



grand concern of human life, was the attainment of *Wisdom*; by which they understood, *moral* wisdom or virtue. In the practice of this, they were indifferent to pleasure or pain, to life or death. For the present life, according to the primitive *Brahmins*, was but the commencement of our existence. The soul after death returned to God, from whom it sprang, and who would bestow eternal life and happiness on the good, but inflict on the wicked different degrees of punishment. They believed, that the souls of men migrated after death into different animal bodies, until having done penance in this manner for their sins, and being purified from evil habits and desires, they were made fit for a more immediate communication with the eternal and divine father of spirits, and source of all happiness. Man, they affirmed, carried about with him, in his own body, enemies which it was his business continually to combat, evil desires and inclinations; by conquering which, it was, that



that he prepared for himself a favourable reception in the heavenly mansions.

SUCH are the accounts that are given by the writers of antiquity, of this singular tribe. And it is easy to perceive how much their tenets coincided at least, if they did not give birth to the *metempsychosis* of Pythagoras, and the divine origin and immortality of the soul—doctrines maintained by the sublimest reasoning in the writings of Plato—and the idea under which the same noble author considers that opposition which is felt between reason and passion; which is, that the rational soul is chained to a furious monster, and that all its endeavours should be bent to cut the chain that binds them together, and to procure its own emancipation. The two *selves* or souls of *Xenophon*, is a doctrine of the same kind: and every man must be struck with the remarkable coincidence there is between these figures of *Plato* and *Xenophon*, and that bold allegory of an *old* and *new* man, which we find in the



inspired writings of St. Paul. It is in my opinion a reproach to the present age, and in general to modern times, that, notwithstanding the advancement of commerce, and the facility of intercourse which is thereby opened with the tribes of India, the sentiments of the *Brakmins* of the present, are not so well understood as were those of the same order in antient times. Emigrants from Europe travel now into the east, not in search of knowledge but of gold; and they are of a very different opinion from *Solomon*, who maintains that wisdom is better than *Rubies*. I cannot help thinking that the genius of modern times, though more accurate, is less sublime than that of antiquity; and withal, more dogmatical, and less open to conviction. The nature of the elements; the origin and end of all things; the nature of the human soul; the supreme good and chief glory of man; these, with other grand and important subjects, exercised the mental powers of antient sages; who did not confine their researches to one particular object,



object, to the humble pursuits of a *botanist*, nor even to the more exalted views of a *Geometrician*; but who, taking a bold and extensive flight over both animated and inanimated matter, combined different ideas by various analogies; ever intent to deduce from the whole, truths more and more abstracted and sublime, whence they might draw practical rules for the conduct of life. In the pursuit of these objects, they spared neither time, labour, or expence. We may form an idea of that ardent desire of knowledge which inspired the breasts of those antient enquirers into truth, from the journey of Pythagoras into Egypt and India; his long residence in the former country; his patient sollicitation, after repeated repulses and evasions, to be admitted to a knowledge of the mysteries of the priests; and by his submitting himself, for that purpose, to the painful rite of circumcision. When we compare the ardour of this man's curiosity, and the variety and extent of his views, with the sedentary and limited occupations of modern



modern *Connoscenti*; is it difficult to determine, which of the two best deserves the name of philosopher. One man of leisure, and without much avarice or ambition, purchases a telescope, with which he stares at the full moon, or makes some observations that have been made a thousand times before him, by way of confirming a theory, which at the same time he supposes to stand in no need of confirmation. Another buys a *microscope*; by means of which he discovers some small vessel or gland, or perhaps, as he may fancy, some insect invisible to the human eye: whence a dispute will in all probability arise, whether it be, after all, an animal or only a particle of matter \*. A third, on some remote coast, or unfrequented mountain, observes a plant which has neither been described by the most ingenious *Buffon*, nor by that *Nomenclator Linnæus*. These gentlemen communicate their discoveries to *Philosophers* licensed by public

\* This is now the case with *Lewenhoeek's Animalculi Seminales*.

authority;



authority; and straightway their obscure names swell the lists of *Members of such or such an academy*, and of *Fellows of the Royal Society*. Such is the taste of the present times. We have our *Græviuses* and our *Burmanni*, as well as the last century had theirs, whose microscopic eyes take in narrow objects, but are never sufficiently opened to admit the images of such as are grand and extensive. Many subjects of importance remain unexplored, while trifles are magnified into mighty concerns, and discussed with minute attention.—But I return from this digression to the Indian Brahmins.

ALTHOUGH we are not so well acquainted with the history of the modern Brahmins of India, as might be expected, from the enlarged knowledge, commerce, and curiosity of the present times; yet we know enough of this tribe, to conclude with certainty, that they have degenerated much from the purity of their ancestors. I know not whether such calculators as

Dr.



Dr. Price, might not be able, from the present corrupt state of the *Brahmins*, to compute the time of the first institution of that order. All religious sectaries, in the course of time, degenerate from the austere virtues of their first heads or leaders. Christians in general, and also the particular *sects* of Christianity, bear witness to the truth of this position: with these *data*, I doubt not but an ingenious calculator might investigate the age of the order of Brahmins, and consequently that of the Hindoo empire, with which that class of men was no doubt coeval.

I HAVE already given a short sketch of what the Indian priests were near two thousand years ago. In the present times it is asserted, that European usurpers sometimes make use even of the *Brahmins* as tools of oppression, and as instruments of plunder. But whatever their lives be, their doctrine is on the whole yet pure and excellent: for among several errors, they maintain those truths which form the  
harmony



harmony of the world, *That there is one* ]  
*supreme God, and that he is delighted with*  
*charity and good works more than by all other*  
*sacrifices.* In general their religious tenets are  
 very consistent with the ideas which are en-  
 tertained of the Divinity in Europe. Many  
 superstitious practices have indeed been  
 introduced among the generality of the  
 people. Wooden images are placed in all  
 their temples, and on certain festivals are ex-  
 hibited on the high-roads and in the streets  
 of towns. These have impressed strangers  
 with a notion that the *Gentoo*s are idol-  
 aters; when in truth the homage they pay  
 to their images, is precisely of the same  
 kind with that which the Roman Ca-  
 tholics yield to the images of our Saviour  
 and the saints, which are only meant to  
 awaken attention, and to give livelier  
 ideas of the objects of their devotion.  
 This I have been repeatedly told by *Gen-*  
*toos*, in whose judgment and veracity I  
 repose great confidence. The images of  
 which I speak, are various, and often mon-  
 strous in their forms. They are figures  
 intended



intended to adumbrate the attributes of the Deity by visible representations of their effects, which appear in the works of creation and providence. Thus far only the Gentoos are idolators, that in worshipping the great God of the universe, they place before their bodily eyes, for the information of their minds, such representations as are calculated to recall, in a vivid manner, to their imaginations, those attributes which they believe that Almighty being *only* to possess.

THE Hindoos, as well as the Persians, Tartars, and adjoining nations, who have inhabited Hindostan since it was conquered by Tamerlane or Timurbeg, though of different nations, religions, laws, and customs, possess nevertheless, in equal degrees, hospitality, politeness, and address. In refinement and ease they are superior to any people to the westward of them. In politeness and address, in gracefulness of deportment, and speech, an Indian is as much superior to a Frenchman of fashion, as a French courtier



tier is to a Dutch burgo-master of DORT\*. A Frenchman is indeed by no means deficient in ease of carriage; but that ease is mixed with forward familiarity, with confidence, and self-conceit. The Hindoos, especially those of the higher *Castes*, are in their demeanour easy and unconstrained, still more than even a French courtier; but their ease and freedom is reserved, modest, and respectful. A Frenchman is polite because he thinks it his honour to be polite: an Indian, because he thinks it his duty. The former is polite because he regards himself; the latter because he respects you.

THEIR persons are straight and elegant, their limbs finely proportioned, their fingers long and tapering, their countenances open and pleasant, and their features exhibit the most delicate lines of beauty in the females, and in the males a kind of manly softness. Their walk and

\* The least civilized of all the towns in Holland.



gait, as well as their whole deportment, is in the highest degree graceful. The dress of the men is a kind of close-bodied gown, like our women's gowns, and wide trowsers, resembling petticoats, reaching down to their slippers. Such of the women as appear in public, have shawls over their heads and shoulders \*, short close jackets, and tight drawers which come down to their ankles. Hence the dress of the men gives them in the eyes of Europeans, an appearance of effeminacy; whereas that of the women will appear rather masculine: such is the influence of habit and custom on human sentiments; an influence which extends not merely to matters of taste, but, as the ingenious Dr. Smith, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, observes, to objects of higher importance.

MANY of the original Hindoo tribes or *Castes* †, most or all the descendants of

\* Somewhat resembling the plaids of N. Britain, and the black veils of Brabant.

† *Caste* is a Portuguese word, importing a class or tribe.

Moors,



Moors, as well as the emigrants which pour in great swarms into India, from Persia and the adjacent countries, are brave, intrepid, and cool in battle.—Having the same weapons, and under similar discipline, why should they not be a match for men of the same country and complexion with themselves, although those men are under the auspices of foreign nations?—The advantage of these auspices may doubtless be counterbalanced by superiority of numbers, and other favourable circumstances, which it is needless to enumerate. These are serious and important objects of public consideration: a neglect of which has already produced the most alarming losses in revenue, and disadvantages in trade, and seems indeed to threaten the extinction of the *present* East India Company.

FROM the difference of Castes or classes of the people in Hindostan, I mean the original inhabitants, there arises a difference of education and dress. But even



the inferior classes are taught reading, writing, and arithmetic: the youth are taught, not within doors, but in the open air; and it is a singular, but not unpleasing spectacle, to behold, in every village, a venerable old man, reclined on a terraced plain, teaching a number of surrounding boys, who regard him with the utmost reverence and attention, like a shepherd feeding his flock. In those simple seminaries, where the want of magnificent halls and theatres is *divinely* compensated by the spacious canopy of Heaven, the gentle and tractable sons of the Hindoos are not only prepared for the business, but instructed in the duties of life; a profound veneration for the object or objects of religious worship; reverence of their parents; respect for their seniors; justice and humanity towards all men, but a particular affection for those of their own *Caste*.

THE Hindoo language is beautiful, expressive, and nervous. In reading and speaking,



speaking, the Hindoos are very musical. Their speech, like that of the Italians, flows in a kind of numbers. There is a dead language, understood only by the *literati* of the country, that is, the priests, called the *Sanscrit* language, in which their sacred volumes are written, even as our sacred scriptures are written in Greek and Hebrew. But whether that language was originally different from that of the country, or whether it has only *now* become unintelligible to the people, through that change which is incident to all living languages, is, I believe, not well known.

HAVING already observed, that the genius of the Hindoos is rather imitative than inventive, I need scarcely add, that they have less curiosity in their nature than the European nations have; that they do not vary their fashions; and that they are not fond of novelty *beyond the precincts of their Harams*. From the temper and tenets of this people, as well as from several hints in ancient historians, it appears more

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than



than probable, that the same kind of garments, of food, of furniture, of buildings, and of manners, which obtained among their progenitors thousands of years ago, actually prevails among the Hindoo tribes at this day. In like manner, the same professions are adhered to by the same families with superstitious exactness. Those professions are exceedingly numerous. This division and subdivision of employment and labour; the vast variety of castes from the *Brahmins* down to the fisherman\*, is one proof, among many others, of the antiquity of the Hindoo nation, and their progress in the arts. It appears very singular, that the different castes are not only prohibited from intermarrying, but also from eating with one another, and even from eating of the same kind of food.

\* The profession of a fisherman was, of all professions, the humblest among the Jews. The Son of God exemplified his divine power in making fishermen instruments of propagating the Gospel.

ALTHOUGH



ALTHOUGH the Gentoo laws, relative to Castes, their education, food, dress, marriages, and occupations, be held forth as religious tenets, yet, upon investigation, they will be found to have been very wise and salutary political institutions, intended to give authority to government; to secure the supreme power in the hands of the priesthood; to preserve to the community different races of labourers, artificers, husbandmen, warriors, and priests. The females are betrothed when in a state of infancy, and marriages are consummated as soon as the parties arrive at the age of puberty: an institution which is necessary to the population of the country; which, but for this precaution, would be greatly diminished by the operation of the Gentoo religion, which admits not of converts from other religions, and easily rejects offensive characters from the number of its own professors, which is called the *Loss of Caste*.



THE Gentoos are persuaded, that the waters of the three great rivers, Ganges, Kistna, and Indus, have the sacred virtue of purifying those who bathe in them, from all pollutions and sins. This religious idea seems also to be founded on a principle of policy, and intended to restrain the natives from migrating into distant countries: for it is remarkable, that the sacred rivers I have just now mentioned, are so situated, that there is not any part of India where the inhabitants may not have an opportunity of washing away their sins. The Ganges, which rises in the mountains of Thibet, with its different branches, runs through the kingdoms of Bengal, Bahar, and Orixas, and the upper provinces of Oude, Rohilcund, Agra, Delhi, and Lahore. The Kistna divides the Carnatic from Golconda, and runs through the Visiapore into the interior parts of the Deccan. And the Indus bounding the Guzurat provinces, separates Hindostan from the dominions of Persia.

THE



THE food of the Hindoos is simple, consisting chiefly of rice, ghee, which is a kind of imperfect butter, milk, vegetables, and oriental spices of different kinds, but chiefly what is called in the east, *chilly*, and in the west, green or Cayen pepper. The warrior *caste*, may eat of the flesh of goats, mutton, and poultry, which is dressed into *carryes* and *pilaws*\*. Other superior castes may eat poultry and fish; but the inferior castes are prohibited from eating flesh or fish of any kind. Their greatest luxury consists in the use of the richest spiceries and perfumes, of which the great people are very lavish. Their dress, in point of richness, is proportioned to their stations: their pomp and equipage

\* *Carries* are a kind of *fricassees* of mutton, fowl, or fish; the sauce of which is composed of dried vegetables, peculiar to the east, and fine rice, boiled with very little water, introduced on a separate plate: The sauce of the *fricassée* is poured on the rice, and the meat laid above both. The *pilaw* is fine Patna rice dry-boiled, and fried with *ghee*, which has been already described, mixed with various spices, and particularly the *cardamon*, brought in on a large dish, in which is concealed amidst the rice, a boiled fowl, or part of a kid, or of a lamb.



consist in a numerous retinue of servants of various denominations, who attend all their visits and excursions; in the dresses of those attendants; the elegance of their palanquins; and the caparisons of their horses, camels, and elephants. It is superfluous to observe, that in consequence of this multiplicity of different ranks, the Hindoos have the highest ideas of subordination, and pay to their superiors the same ready deference and homage, which they expect themselves from their inferiors.

THEIR houses cover much ground, and have spacious galleries and accommodations of various kinds. The apartments are small, and the furniture not very elegant, if we except the richest Persian carpets. The grandeur of their palaces consists in baths, perfumes, temples, gods, and harems. The *harems* or *zenanas*, that is, the residences of the women, are removed from the front of the house, and lighted only from a square space in the centre of the whole building. The apparel of the women is inconceivably rich;



rich; they have jewels on their fingers and about their necks, and also in their ears and nostrils, with bracelets not only on their wrists, but on their arms above their elbows, and on their legs around their ancles.

ONE particular class of women are allowed to be openly prostituted: these are the famous dancing girls. Their attitudes and movements are very easy, and not ungraceful. Their persons are delicately formed, gaudily decorated, and highly perfumed. By the continuation of wanton attitudes, they acquire, as they grow warm in the dance, a frantic lasciviousness themselves, and communicate, by a natural contagion, the most voluptuous desires to the beholders.

THEIR civil institutions respecting the division and security of property, and the internal police of the country, were originally founded on principles of the soundest political wisdom, and were well calculated to



to promote the happiness of the whole nation, as well as that of particular castes or tribes. But the innovations of conquerors and usurpers, in several instances, particularly in the tenure of immoveable property, which was originally of a feudal nature, have marred the harmony of the ancient constitution, and rendered property and personal liberty more precarious, less defined, and more exposed to chicanery and misconstruction.

ALTHOUGH the Hindoos are naturally the most inoffensive of all mortals, yet does their humanity consist more in abstaining from injurious, than in the performance of beneficent actions. There is a wonderful mildness in their manners, and also in their laws, which are influenced by their manners; by which the murder of an human creature, and of a cow, are the only crimes that are punished by death. Yet with all this gentleness of disposition, they are inferior to the boisterous Europeans, with all their vices, in the virtues of compassion



passion and generosity. They are wanting in that tenderness which is the most amiable part of our nature. They are less affected by the distresses and dangers, and even the accidental deaths of one another, than any nation I know in the old or new world. Yet they *love* to excess: a proof, either of the inconsistency of the human character; or that the amorous passion is not derived from the noblest part of our nature.

THIS insensibility of the Hindoos to the distresses and dangers of their fellow-creatures, appears to me a wonderful phenomenon. Perhaps that despotism which has long been exercised under the Mogul tyranny, by familiarising the mind to scenes of death, has blunted a sense of its terrors. Perhaps those ideas of predestination and irresistible fate, which prevail in Asia, and in all despotic governments, prepares the mind for an acquiescence in all events. An English gentleman was standing by a native of Hindostan, when an enormous and fierce  
tiger



tiger leaped from a thicket, and carried off a screaming boy, the son of one of his neighbours. The Englishman expressed symptoms of the most extreme horror, while the Hindoo remained unmoved. "What," said the former, "are you unaffected by so dreadful a scene?" "The great God," said the other, "would have it so."—Whatever may be the cause, it is certain, that death is regarded with less horror in India than in any other country in the world. The origin and the end of all things, say the philosophers of India of the present times, is a *vacuum*. A state of *repose* is the state of greatest perfection: and this is the state after which a wise man aspires. It is better, say the Hindoos, to sit than to walk, and to sleep than to wake; but death is the best of all.

ACCORDING to the Gentoo laws, criminals sentenced to death are not to be strangled, suffocated, or poisoned, but to be cut off by the sword; because, without an *effusion of blood*, malefactors are supposed  
to



to die with all their sins about them ; but the shedding of their blood, it is thought, expiates their crimes. The unjust punishment of *Nundcomar*, who was hanged on a gibbet against the laws of his country, and even by an *ex post facto* English law, was aggravated by that circumstance of horror, that he died without an effusion of blood.

THE Hindoos are well acquainted with the nature of simples, and apply them judiciously either in performing cures which require not amputation, or in effecting death by quick or slow poisons. They have been for ages, in the practice of inoculating for the small-pox ; on which occasion, as well as on others, they have recourse to the favourable mediation of charms, or spells.

ALTHOUGH the practice of Hindoo women burning themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands, and embracing in the mean time their dead bodies in their arms,



arms, be not so general now as it has formerly been, yet does it still prevail among some of the wives of men of high caste and condition: and although this effort of frantic love, courage, and ambition, be deemed an aggrandizement of the family and relations of both husband and wife, but especially of the wife's, yet their friends and relations constantly endeavour to dissuade the women who declare their resolutions of *burning*, from carrying them into execution. Even the *Brahmins* do not encourage this practice.

THE causes which inspire Hindoo women with this desperate resolution, are, I imagine, the following:

IN the first place; as the wife has, from her earliest infancy, been betrothed in marriage to her husband, and from that time has never been permitted to see another man; as she is instructed to believe that he is perfectly accomplished, and taught to respect and honour him; as, after consummation,



summation, she is shut up from the company, conversation, and even the sight of other men, with still greater care, if possible, than before, being now debarred from seeing even the father or elder brother of her husband, the bonds of her affection must needs be inconceivably strong and indissoluble. To an European lady, the *zenana* naturally appears in the light of an horrible prison: but the daughters of Asia never consider confinement to the *zenana* as any hardship. They consider it as a condition of their existence, and they enjoy all the happiness of which they have any conception; their whole desires being centred and fixed on their husband, their food, jewels, and female attendants.

In the second place, if the wife survive her husband, she cannot marry again, and is treated as an inferior person, and an outcast from her family. Nay, she is obliged, in her mournful and hopeless widow-hood,



to perform all the offices of a menial servant.

In the third place, she is flattered with the idea of having immortalized her name, and aggrandized her children, and her own and husband's families.

LASTLY, she is rendered insensible to the pains and horrors of what she is to suffer, by those intoxicating perfumes and mixtures which are administered to her after she has declared her final and unalterable resolution—I say her final resolution, because one or two declarations, of an intention to die with her husband, is not sufficient. The strength of her resolution undergoes a probation. There is a certain time prescribed by the Gentoo law, during which her family and friends exert their utmost influence, in order to dissuade her from burning; and if she persist in her resolution to the end of that period, it is not lawful to use any more persuasions with



with her, to abandon it. If she should alter her purpose after that period, she would be punished with the loss of all *castes*, and live in a state of the most complete misery and contempt. Nay, if an European or Christian does but touch her very garment with his finger, when she is going to the pile, an immediate stop is put to the ceremony, she is forced to live an outcast from her family, and from the Gentoo religion.

You will doubtless, my friend, have curiosity to know, in what manner, after all these stimulatives to perseverance, the tender sex, among a soft and effeminate people, sustains the near approach of a scene so full of awe and horror. Amidst her weeping relations and friends, the voluntary victim to love and honor alone appears serene and undaunted. A gentle smile is diffused over her countenance: she walks upright, with an easy but firm step; talks to those around her, of the virtues of the deceased, and of the joy with which



she will be transported when her shade shall meet with his; and encourages her sorrowful attendants to bear with fortitude the *sight* of those momentary sufferings which she herself is about to *feel*.—Having ascended the funeral pile, she lays herself down by the body of her husband, which she fervently embraces. A dose of narcotic mixtures is then administered for the last time; and instantly the person, whose office it is, sets fire to the pile.

Thus the most determined resolution of which we can form any conception, is found in the weaker sex, and in the soft climes of Asia. It is to the honour of that sex and those climes, that the greatest courage they exhibit, is the effect, not of the furious impulses of rage and revenge, but conscious dignity and love.

It might naturally be imagined by an European, that the several wives of one man (for polygamy is general throughout all Asia) would regard one another with mutual



mutual jealousy and aversion; and that they in reality do, has been asserted by writers of high reputation. The fact however is quite otherwise: they visit one another with great friendship and cordiality; and if they are of the same *caste*, will occasionally eat together.—The husband is restrained from eating with his wives, either by a regard to custom; or, as I have been informed by some of the Gentoos themselves, by a precept of their religion.

NOTWITHSTANDING the extreme antiquity of most Indian nations, I am told that in India beyond the Ganges, on the confines of *Aracan* and *Pegu*, there is a people (if solitary savages roaming through woods in quest of prey, deserve the name of people) that appear to be in the very first stage of society. They are the only people in the known world that go absolutely naked, without the smallest covering on any part of their bodies. They live on fruit, which grows spontaneously,



in the uncultivated deserts they inhabit, in great abundance; and on the flesh of animals, which they tear alive and devour raw. They sit on their hams, with their legs and arms disposed in the manner of monkeys. At the approach of men, they flee into their woods. They take care of their offspring, and live in families, but seem to have no ideas of subordination of rank, or civil government. I have never had occasion to see this race of mortals myself, but I have conversed with several persons who have seen them; all of whom concur in the general account of them, which I have now given you.

I am, &c. &c.

LETTER



LETTER XXXII.

To J— M—, Esq; London.

Calcutta, 5th October 1779.

MY DEAR SIR,

**I** HAVE at last determined to return to Europe as speedily as possible. I have obtained leave to go passenger in the Swallow packet, which has been under sailing orders ever since the month of July. I could not think of letting slip an opportunity of seeing *Suez* and *Grand Cairo*. It is probable that I may be the bearer of the Company's first dispatches. This letter and its duplicate go by Dutch ships to Holland.

In two letters dated at this place, one of them the 20th, the other the 28th of September, I have endeavoured to impress

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your



your mind with an idea of the immense advantages to be derived to Great Britain, by a wise and generous system of policy, from the ingenious natives and fertile soil of Hindostan.

BUT in opposition to the flattering ideas thrown out in those letters, it may not improbably be urged, that the Company's India investments fell in Europe at a considerable loss, and consequently that unwrought commodities, as well as the cotton and silk manufactures of India, are obtained at so great an expence as to render a trade to advantage impracticable. Such reasoning will appear plausible to persons unacquainted with India; nevertheless it is not just. How does it happen, that the French, who of late years have not carried on any trade with India but through the English, as the vehicle of remittances, have sold the unwrought and manufactured commodities of Bengal, and the coast of Coromandel, at public outcry in L<sup>e</sup> Orient, at the rate of 25 to 40 per cent.



cent profit to the importer, although those commodities are charged with an heavy freight, king's duty, farmers duty, indult, insurance, commissions, and various other smart expences, amounting in the whole from 26 to 31 per cent.?—How does it happen, that India goods imported by Danish and Portuguese free-traders, have yielded high profits, notwithstanding that they are subject to higher duties than the companies of their respective nations, and other heavy charges, arising from the want of home consumption and exportation to foreign markets?—The established companies of Denmark and Portugal, as well as Holland, gain by their sales, when loaded only with the charges incident to the goods themselves: but the two former of these, having no territorial revenues, their profits are reduced by the necessary expences of civil and military establishments.

THERE are reasons for imagining, that the English Company at home are less  
active



active than they might be in procuring for their goods adequate prices. But the capital error originated in Hindostan, where it still remains uncorrected. The Directors, misled by wrong information from India, and forgetting those sentiments which on former occasions they inculcated with a strength of argument worthy of the justice of that cause in which it was exerted, have adopted maxims the most subversive that can be imagined of their interests; maxims which have encouraged the rapacity of their faithless principal servants in India, to concert means of reducing the value, and at the same time of enhancing the cost of the several articles which compose the general investments. Monopolies of manufactured goods, opium, beetle nut, tobacco, salt, and rice, (articles which had long employed the industry and ingenuity of the people) gave birth to various shameful oppressions and unreasonable exactions; which enriched indeed a few highly-favoured and pampered individuals, but which threw multitudes

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of



of husbandmen, labourers, and manufacturers, idle; raised the prices of the necessities of life, and greatly depopulated the country. The number of labourers and manufacturers being reduced, and the demand for goods still continuing the same, the quality of the commodity was necessarily debased for the sake of expedition; while the advanced prices of provisions, and other necessaries, advanced of course the price of labour. In this manner was the first shock given to the Company's remittances, and to the population, and consequently the cultivation of their possessions. Another evil prevailed in the avarice of the subordinate European Chiefs, who profited of the influence of their stations, to engross agencies, and raw as well as manufactured goods, upon their own terms. Thus it became their interest still more and more to debase the quality of the goods they purchased: for while the manufacturer received a price diminished in proportion to the reduced quality of his commodity, the market price was still kept up to  
its



its old standard. The whole loss fell in this manner upon the Company and the industrious private trader; and it fell the more heavily on the Company, that it was accompanied with an accumulated load of *extra* charges. — But it was reserved for the board of trade, established in the year 1774, to compleat this iniquitous system, by contracting, from motives of partiality, perhaps of interest, for the several articles which compose the Company's investments, on such conditions as have increased prices from 25 to 40 per cent. and, in proportion to the advanced price of goods, debased their quality.

THESE allegations may be supported by a variety of facts and circumstances, which form a chain of evidence not to be fabricated by subornation, and which therefore cannot possibly be rejected. For it is notorious, that foreigners and private merchants have of late years been able to purchase many kinds of goods, of the same qualities with those which form the Company's



pany's investment, from 30 to 50 per cent. cheaper than they appear on the Company's invoices; that the members of the board of trade, with only 1500 l. and the president with only 2000 l. a year, restrained as they are from all perquisites and emoluments, have yet amassed amazing fortunes, although it is a fact of public notoriety, that very few of them were in opulent circumstances when the board was instituted; and that contractors under the board of trade, have been enabled, in as short a time, to retire with independent fortunes, after transferring their contracts to natives; who have also with wonderful rapidity, become great and opulent. There is not a speedier way to wealth in India, than the enjoyment of those contracts: for besides that the terms on which they are made, are always egregiously in favour of the contractor, they afford opportunities of a thousand extortions and exactions.

FROM



FROM the establishment of this immaculate board of trade\*, to the time when the investment shall be completed for 1781, it may be computed, with a great degree of certainty, that the whole investments (including the late loss by fire in Calcutta) have amounted to 746 lacks, 8297 current rupees; on which the Company have been defrauded by the encreased price and debased quality of goods, at least  $33\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. Thus the Company's trade has in that period sustained a loss of 24,863,432 current rupees; which, at two shillings each rupee, is equal to 2,468,943l. English.

FROM the foregoing observations it appears, that the actual losses upon the sales in Britain, have been occasioned, not by glutting or over-stocking the market of Europe, but solely by the advanced price and debased quality of Indian goods. These circumstances have, moreover, encreased

\* In October 1774.



the charges at least twelve and a half per cent. above what they would have been on the same quantity of goods, had they been such as they were formerly: so that the loss which the East India Company have sustained in the space of seven years, by the infidelity and rapacity of their servants, may, on a moderate computation, be estimated at three millions sterling.

THE British legislature and East India Company were undoubtedly ignorant of the infamous practices and wiles of India, when they established the board of trade; for if they had known these, they would assuredly have restrained its powers within stricter limits. However, the instructions of the Directors to the Governor General and Council, which accompanied the general commission, have, by the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th articles, fully authorized the Supreme Board to compel the inferior to do their duty.—But there was probably a connivance between the *old* members of *both* boards, formerly colleagues, arising from



from mutual *sympathy*. An attempt to compel the dutiful attention of the inferior board, would have led to fatal discoveries, and also have thwarted the projected measures of rapacious ambition; a *furor* which, in the meridian of Hindostan, rages more than the bile and the liver \*. To so glaring a pitch has the board of trade carried its audacity, that a very high member thereof had the assurance to threaten a distinguished officer of the board with dismissal from his place, if he should continue to pay frequent complimentary visits to a member of the other board, whose integrity was believed to be incorruptible. Doubtless this *civil* check must have proceeded from a consciousness of guilt, and a dread of the probity of both the officer and the Supreme Counsellor.

\* The English in Hindostan are universally subject to the bile, which almost always terminates in the liver, and becomes dangerous. This disorder they denominate *the liver*.



FROM what has been advanced in the letters to which I have already referred you, and from the undeniable facts that have been mentioned in this, I hope, my friend, that you will not hesitate to conclude with me, that the British acquisitions in India, under a wise administration, are capable of yielding a far greater revenue, and a much richer exportation, than they have ever in fact yielded hitherto; and that the interests of the East India Company and the English nation, have been sacrificed to infidelity, rapacity, and oppression.

I am, &c.



## LETTER XXXIII.

To J— M—, Esq. London.

Calcutta, October 8, 1779.

**T**O restore to Hindostan Peace, with her attendant, Arts, ought to be the first object of the English East-India Company; and indeed, in the present situation of public affairs, of the English nation. A policy at once so wise and generous, would meet with the noblest rewards. How great the satisfaction, of making whole nations happy in the enjoyment of family, property, personal security, religion, ease, and affluence! How rich the tribute which the industry, gratitude, and fidelity of an ingenious and affectionate people would return, as a compensation for such blessings, to the liberal authors of their felicity! For this noble purpose it is necessary, in the first



first place, to erect the standard of liberty and justice. This being once immovably fixed, an high degree of improvement in agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, with all their beneficial consequences, will follow of course. Yet this improvement may be rendered more rapid, as well as extensive, by the liberality and wisdom of the protecting state, which will share so largely in its advantages.

I HAVE in a former letter expressed an opinion, in which I am more and more confirmed, that nothing could be more conducive to the promotion of industry of every kind in this peninsula, than the establishment of a general bank, treasury, and mint, upon a new and extensive scale, and on liberal principles. In a remote subordinate country, where commerce is unnaturally fettered by an exclusive right of trade, vested in a particular society, both country and commerce naturally decay. If a *dependent* country exports *all*, and imports *little*, without converting the dif-

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ference



ference into an accumulating debt, in reserve, or as a fund appropriated to the defrayment of the expences of protection against foreign enemies, and the administration of justice; the commerce of that country is upheld only by the precious metals circulating, in exchange for labour, under the stamp of authority.

If these metal coins are intrinsically worth as much as will bear a premium of insurance, commission, freight, duty, interest of extra-advance, with other petty charges; and after all, leave eighty per cent. to the exporter, they will find a passage out of the declining country; as individuals, disregarding the loss of twenty per cent. will eagerly embrace the only expedient they have of remitting their acquisitions to their own or any other country. This *forced* commerce, so destructive in its tendency, cannot long exist; and in its fall, it will probably involve the ruin of that stately fabric, which the good fortune of the Company, and the integrity  
and



and valour of their former servants have erected in India.

IN a country thus circumstanced, the springs of life can flow only in the circulation of the remaining specie, by the expences incident to the civil and military establishments of the sovereign monopolists. Whatever is exported in country produce or manufactures, to the remote proprietors, more than is imported from them, and that exceeds the actual redundancy (which may be denominated the clear revenue of the lord paramount) of the country, tends to exhaust the constitution by slow but certain stages; its existence can only be prolonged by protection, and a wise system of government.

THE monies, jewels, and manufactures, exported merely as remittances by *individuals*, whether publickly or secretly, increase the disorder; because from *them* neither return nor protection are ever expected. But, when individuals have ex-



ported such a quantity of the circulating specie in gold and silver coins, as gave action and vigour to agriculture and manufactures, the political body, deprived of the powers of inspiration and respiration, sinks down an inanimated corpse.

AN instance of such a country as I have in this reasoning supposed, we have in the peninsula of Hindostan ; that part of it, I mean, which is under the actual, not the virtual, dominion of the English East-India Company. The natives did not originally employ their ingenuity and labour, from the impulse of any natural appetite, or artificial want ; but the rapacity of domineering strangers forced them to purchase self-preservation by gold, which was to be obtained only in exchange for manufactures. Hence they measured the price of their labour only by gold. Where this is not to be had, to what purpose submit to any toil ? The precious metals ought never therefore to be drained from India ; for there, above all countries in the world,



world, they are necessary to the encouragement of industry and art; and they who trade in the way of barter, and import gold and silver coins for necessary use, are the best friends to their country, provided that the balance of trade in their favour be ultimately liquidated in bullion.

LET the English East-India Company's gross revenue be estimated at three millions a year: suppose one half that sum necessarily remains in circulation, to defray the civil and military charges of government; that the other half is remitted home in the Bengal investment, and in money to purchase the investments from China, Bombay, and Bencoolen, more than the receipt of imports from Europe, and the bills drawn on the Directors; and that out of the million and an half remaining in circulation, one third part is annually remitted home by the Company's servants, as their private acquisitions in *unperishable* commodities, that is, gold, silver, and



precious stones: it will follow, that two millions are exported annually, for which no equivalent is returned; and of that sum, one quarter part in *unperishable* commodities, whose source is not inexhaustible; the circulation and influence of which gave life to manufactures, to trade, to agriculture, and industry of every kind. The consumption of *perishable* commodities, exported in fair trade, is an obvious advantage to a manufacturing country, as it secures an annual and perpetual demand. But the exportation of goods which are *unperishable*, and bear a *fixed* value, even in exchange for *perishable* goods, tends to shut up the avenues of circulation, if the *unperishable* goods are not also the genuine production of the country, and that the fountain is *not* exhaustible.

I SHALL in my next, endeavour to prove, that the bullion and coins at present in circulation in the European dominions of Hindostan, are now reduced within so contracted



tracted a compass, as to threaten the most ruinous consequences, if some measures be not speedily taken to avert the impending danger.

I am, &c.

LETTER



## LETTER XXXIV.

To J— M—, Esq;

Calcutta, Oct. 12, 1779.

ANY enquiry into the quantity of coins in circulation in Bengal, will prove fruitless. With regard to this matter, the most intelligent cannot form even a conjecture. The numerous mints, the various values set upon coins, independently of their intrinsic worth, together with the arts of Shroffs, Banians, and Circars\*, will render any investigation of it that may be set on foot by authority, difficult in its progress, and in its issue uncertain.

MANY persons imagine that there is in Bengal still a vast quantity of *specie*; and

\* Banians are native brokers; Shroffs are money-changers and bankers; and Circars are clerks or writers.

they



they found this opinion upon the apparent sufficiency of the circulation in that country, without considering that the decay of money manifests itself most strongly, by a rapid decline of trade, which renders a less quantity of specie adequate to the general demand. Commerce is a spontaneous plant, of a nature too delicate to bear constraint, and that cannot exist without the nourishing influence of freedom; which again can have no being, in matters of commerce, without a copious circulation of some sign of value stamped by public authority.

THE idea of an abundant quantity of money still circulating in Bengal, is chiefly founded on a calculation of sums exported from Europe since the first discovery of the mines of Mexico and Peru. But notwithstanding this exportation of coins from Europe, and that new conquests to the northward, particularly the Rohilla country in 1773, have poured into the territories of the English East India Company  
fresh



fresh supplies, the draught from this channel has been more plentiful than the sources whence it has been supplied.

THE country of the Rohillas, subdued by the arms of the Company, was exposed at once to the avarice and oppression of the English, and to the rapacity, tyranny, and brutality of Sujah-ul-Dowla. The wealth and treasures of this country were seized by the conquerors, and the inoffensive inhabitants forced to abandon their native soil, and to seek an asylum in the bosoms of other enemies, less impolitic and barbarous than those from whom they fled. The plunder of the English, or of persons acting under their auspices, was computed to be a million sterling, and that of Sujah-ul-Dowla certainly amounted to a greater sum. Thus, upwards of two millions sterling flowed from the Rohilla country into the kingdom of Bengal, and was easily swallowed up in the vacant gulph.

IT



It is certain that sums surpassing the Rohilla plunder, have since been annually sent out of the Bengal provinces, in all probability never to return again. Monies sent to China, Madras, Bombay, Bencoolen, the Maratta territories, Java, Casmire, and other inland places, are less likely to return, than what are sent to Europe. Nadir-Scha carried away from Delhi in 1738, in specie, massive ornaments, plate, ingots, &c. to the value of about 40 millions sterling: a sum greater than half the bullion which before that period had been imported by Europeans into Hindostan, since the earliest discovery of the mines of America. Cossim-Alli-Cawn carried away in 1764, a treasure in specie perhaps equal to a quarter, or even a third part of the whole coin at that time in circulation in Bengal and Bahar. The deficiency in the usual imports of bullion, and by exportation of silver, in the ten years from 1757 to 1766, was more than eight millions. Since that year, at a moderate computation, the Company and private



vate traders under the British constitution in Hindostan, cannot have exported to China, in coin and bullion, less than seven millions. The last war with Hyder Ally and the present Mahratta war, have carried off above three millions, in the current coins of Bengal. Bengal has either ignorantly or disingenuously submitted to a balance of trade against herself with the coast of Coromandel, Malabar, and Guzarat, which has been liquidated with money. She has been continually paying a heavy ballance in money to the Dutch of Batavia, for sugar, arrack, and spiceries. Her opium has not been so well husbanded as to draw in her favour, as it might have done, a current of trade with other eastern countries. And ever since the fall of diamonds in Europe\*, the quantities of gold and silver sent home as remittances by the Company's servants, have been immense. During these last fifteen years there has

\* Which happened in consequence of the vast discoveries of mines in *Brazil*.



been very little silver, and no gold, imported from Europe; and scarcely any gold from the eastward; neither has the trade to the gulphs of Persia and Arabia been so conducted and encouraged, as to produce the regular supplies of gold and silver which it had been accustomed to yield. In fact, there has been very little gold coined in that period in Bengal.

THE quantity of coin must originally have been inconceivably great, if these continual drains have not reduced it to a narrow compass. No computation, founded even on conjecture, can keep pace with so vast a consumption.

THE dread of tyranny, so universally exercised in Asia, has indeed probably induced many of the principal natives of Hindostan to conceal their treasure under ground; whence it may be presumed, that their successors have of late been digging it, and by that means, that they have furnished a temporary supply to answer



swer the faint calls of an expiring trade : But assuredly, that fountain (if it is not merely imaginary) and the fund which it yielded, are both now nearly exhausted.— Asiatics generally convert their riches into jewels, of which four-fifths of their treasures consist. Reasoning from these matters of fact, we may conclude, with a considerable degree of probability, that the quantity of coin in circulation before the dominion of the English became absolute in Bengal, never could have been so very great as many people have been taught to believe.

THE flourishing state of agriculture and manufactures, the high interest of money, and the fixed value of bullion, before the vast sums which have of late years been exported were taken out of circulation, clearly demonstrate, that the quantity in circulation never exceeded, in any very great degree, that which was requisite to the current purposes of trade : for it has ever been observed, in all commercial countries, that



that when the coins in circulation exceeded the necessary demands of trade, their nominal values fell insensibly to the market prices of the pure metals contained in them, and oftentimes below it; whence the value of the metals was considerably lessened.

SUCH is the influence of authority!—The diminution of the value of coins is less perceptible in the estimation of either imaginary or real coins, than in the advanced prices of those commodities for which they are exchanged.—If the diminished quantity of coins has not had that effect in *India*, it is because the prices of country manufactures, and commodities proper for foreign trade, have basely and treacherously been upheld by pernicious contracts, calculated solely to enrich a few individuals, high in station or in favour, at the expence of their employers and the impoverished natives. By these contracts, all kinds of goods for exportation, and many for native consumption, are made to



pass through the unhallowed hands of various rapacious agents, until the first cost of many articles is doubled before it receives the Company's *impression* in their export warehouses.—Another cause why the want of bullion has not yet been felt in all its destructive consequences, is, that the circulating coins have from necessity been made a commercial commodity, by which the acquisitions of individuals are legally remitted from India. Manufactures being neglected, a less quantity of coins is sufficient to maintain a circulation. The evils dreaded from the diminished quantity of coins would have appeared conspicuously before this time, had not trade, agriculture, and population, diminished in a still greater proportion. But, from a continuation of the export of coin, the evil day is fast approaching, which will involve the British East India Company in the ruin of that people, over whom the power of arms and of fortune hath acquired a dominion, which they have neither wisdom nor firmness to maintain.

IN



IN this alarming situation, the danger of which is probably the greater that it is not suspected, a remedy may still be found ; more simple as well as efficacious in its nature, than those who have imbibed Asiatic maxims from their predecessors, or than designing Gomastahs\* and Bani-ans will be willing to allow.

LET the natives, by easy gradations, be reconciled to the idea of supporting, by means of divers punishments, the authority and influence of such salutary laws as are not directly incompatible with the leading principles of their religious casts, professions, feudal tenures, the subordination of ranks, and the superior dignity of those in public authority ; which, in all Asiatic governments must necessarily be preserved inviolate. This I believe to be practicable : for I presume, that in many instances the prejudices of custom and education will give way to motives of

\* Gomastahs are a kind of country brokers.



self-interest and personal security. Let markets be established for the productions of agriculture and art. Fix one certain standard of coins; and supply the deficiency of the precious metals by paper currency. The faith and credit of government, pledged for so large a portion of the circulating wealth of the country, will operate, as the public stocks do in Britain, to secure the loyalty and fidelity of the holders against all treachery, and all machinations in favour either of foreign or domestic foes.

If industry receive not any check in bartering either labour or goods for any circulating commodity of established value, the redundancy or net revenue of the lord paramount, after affording protection to the natives, may safely be exported, without doing any injury to the country from a want of equal returns: because the common course of trade, and the natural interest of the lord, will secure a sufficient supply of precious metals to



give efficacious currency to bank notes. Thus the productions of industry and ingenuity will find so invariable a staple, that every apprehension of superfluous produce will subside: an apprehension which has so often discouraged the labours of the manufacturer and husbandman, and contributed to depopulate the most fertile fields in Hindostan.

THE charges of collecting make now an enormous defalcation of the Company's revenues\*, distress the zemindar or renter, and oppress the ryot or sub-tenant, who are equally defrauded in the exchange of money; but the latter is ultimately loaded with the burthen of the difference of exchange, as well as with all the gifts and bribes which the zemin-

\* In 1772, by a computation, it was shewn that the Company's proportion of the collected revenue was, as  $17\frac{1}{2}$  to  $22\frac{1}{2}$ . The remaining 5 in  $22\frac{1}{2}$ , or  $22\frac{2}{3}$  per cent. were swallowed up in the charges of collection. The net revenue being estimated at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  millions, makes the gross revenue equal to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions, consequently one million is thus wasted in unnecessary charges.



dars are forced to give to chiefs, collectors, and their numberless train of harpies, under the denomination of dependents and servants.

By means of stamping a fixed general value upon coins, and of notes bearing effectual value, these destructive evils will cease; and the collectors, zemindars, and traders, will be enabled to remit their rents, taxes, and properties to the metropolis, and from place to place, without the expence, risque, and oppression incident to the present mode of transportation, and the unconscionable, usurious exactions upon the bills of Shroffs\*.

THE opening of channels for private remittances to Europe, would be attended

\* The necessary deposit of coin in the bank, will, upon any emergency of invasion or intestine commotion, serve the most useful purposes, and, together with the quantity of paper in circulation, will tend to secure attachment and fidelity in the people, from motives of self-interest.

with



with many advantages to the Company and the British nation, and with still more to India. Many such channels might be opened, without transgressing that line which is drawn between the exclusive commerce of the Company and private trade. For instance; as the Company's trade and possessions in India naturally tend to extend the sale of their principal commodities in Europe, it is reasonable to suppose that they may encrease their homeward investments: which would enable them to introduce a legal and secure mode of furnishing their European servants in India with remittances, to a very considerable amount, by annual bills; whence solid benefits would accrue to themselves, as well in the exchange as in the circulation of their bank-paper.

ONE great principle should be invariably observed, that a greater quantity of coins or paper-money be not thrust into circulation than the progress of agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and popu-



lation, necessarily require, in order to give freedom and ease to the exchange thereof from hand to hand. At the same time it must be allowed, that a superfluity of coins, or other currency, is not so pernicious as a deficiency thereof; since the natural influence and credit of every wise government, will always be able to support the circulation both of coin and paper to a certain reasonable extent; in as much as in the common course of trade the superfluous quantity of coin will gradually disappear, until the remaining quantity be reduced to a just level. I might add, in confirmation of this reasoning, that there are always certain timid and avaricious people, who hoard up coins, through want of confidence and spirit to apply them to the purposes for which coinage was invented.—From this general plan, of fixing the value of coins and establishing a bank, maturely digested, improved, and carried into execution, an annual revenue would arise, exceeding half a million sterling.

PERSONS



PERSONS who have resided long in India, will very probably assert, that it will be impossible to introduce any practice into that country which interferes with *established custom*, and which gives employment to so wealthy a cast as that of the Circars, of whom most of the Banians and Shroffs are a part. Gentlemen who entertain this opinion, do not sufficiently reflect on the nature of the human mind; which is of a very pliant and versatile nature, and which, through the influence of fear, friendship, or necessity, is reconciled, without very great difficulty, to all circumstances and situations. Besides, they do not consider, that the present mode of negotiating the exchange and currency of coins, is not so antient as to have become the constant and invariable custom of the country. The greatest bankers and negotiators of money in the eastern world, the SEETS of *Muxadabad*, from a low state and origin, became the founders of the present pernicious system, the commencement of which cannot be traced farther back than



than the year 1720. And farther; it is well known that either the king, or any of his nabobs, merely by a mandate under his seal, could alter the representations upon the coins, or reduce their real or nominal values.—When the simple exercise of power, without securing the current value of the coins, could so effectually carry its purposes, what may not be expected from an equal degree of power, guided in all its operations by a steady regard to justice? Add to this consideration, that probably two thirds of the whole circulation would once in every year pass through the Company's treasury, in the receipt of the territorial revenues, taxes, and duties, and also return into the channel of circulation through their European and other servants, whose duty and interest it would be to support its credit.

I am, &c.

LETTER



LETTER XXXV.

To J—— M——, Esq. London.

Calcutta, October 15, 1779.

**T**O restore the Emperor of Hindostan to his hereditary imperial throne, would be an act of wisdom, as well as of justice. From a conduct so noble, so generous, and just, the British nation would derive such a reputation for virtue, and raise for themselves such a monument of glory in Asia, as no nation hath ever attained, and which in fact are not otherwise attainable.

SINCE the 18th of September 1773, the date of the treaty of Benaras, Hindostan has been in a state of perfect anarchy, without a constitutional head, or any acknowledged sovereignty in any particular



ticular state or person upon earth. Indecision and uncertainty with regard to this great point of SOVEREIGNTY, have been productive of convulsions, which still continue to threaten sudden destruction to the English Company, and a series of revolutions in Hindostan, more interesting to Europe than those which preceded the ascendancy of the Company's government in that country.

AT this time, the sovereign powers are usurped by *nominal* nabobs, representing a king of Delhi as Emperor of *Hindostan*: their authority being originally derived from the Emperor, but still limited and revocable. The English Company, as treasurers of the empire, collect the imperial revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, under the Emperor's special grant and authority, in consideration of their fidelity, loyalty, attachment, and services; and particularly, upon condition of their being perpetual guarantees for the payment of twenty-six lacks of Sicca rupees, being



EUROPE, ASIA, *and* AFRICA. 381  
being three hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds sterling, as an annual tribute from the nabobship of Bengal, and for the free and perpetual possession of the provinces of Illiahabad and Corah, *solemnly ceded and guaranteed to the king, as a royal demesne, for the support of his imperial dignity.*—Such were the conditions on which the nabobs and the English Company received their authority and privileges from the court of Delhi.

BUT now the nabobs refuse allegiance, and the Company have not only withheld the stipulated tribute, but have sold the provinces of Illiahabad and Corah to the nabob of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla, a tributary and immediate servant of the empire; who had also solemnly joined in the former cessions and guaranty to the king of Delhi.

ALTHOUGH the sovereignty of the emperor be denied, and his rights withheld  
from



from him with equal impolicy and injustice, his name was nevertheless held forth by the Company, as a pretext for demanding from other European states, as well as from natives and British subjects, quit-rents, duties, and imposts. All monies are coined in his name; civil and criminal courts are held in his name; and in his name, justice continues to be administered and executed. Yet the English Company make war and peace, and support a military establishment, and also a court of supreme judicature, which issues writs and administers justice according to the common statute laws of England, upon *ex post facto* principles, in the name of the king of Great Britain. This court executes, with rigorous severity, its criminal and penal decrees, and extends its jurisdiction as well to the lives, liberty, and property of the natives, who are confessedly subjects of the empire, and within the imperial territories, as to the migrating subjects of Great Britain.

THIS



THIS government, the system of which is undefinable, because right, fact, and form, are so manifestly at variance, cannot in the nature of things, have permanent existence. A succession of discordant measures, springing from various and venal sources, must confound and counteract each other, until the power and influence of a government, at once so iniquitous and unstable, be reduced to so low a state, that necessity will point to its final subversion, as the only method of restoring peace, liberty, and happiness to the people.

THE sovereignty is beyond a doubt vested in *Shah Allum*, king of Delhi.—To deny that fact, and not to support the right of that prince, would be to overthrow all British claims and pretensions in every part of Hindostan. Wisdom and sound policy must here overrule the frenzy of avarice and ambition. The reigning prince is the undoubted sovereign of Hindostan, being the great great grandson of Aurenzebe, who was the tenth (that reigned) in direct  
lineal



lineal descent from Tamerlane.—The grand question concerning the sovereignty being decided, another important question may then also be decided; whether the splendid superstructure that has been raised by the English Company in India, be founded on a rock or on sand?

THE king of Delhi being acknowledged as the sovereign of all Hindostan, the greatest body of merchants in the world, by a wise improvement of that revolution, would not only prolong its existence, but acquire new and unexampled credit, wealth, and grandeur; and the British nation strictly allied to the Emperor of Hindostan, on principles of justice and mutual security and advantage, would emerge from its present distresses, and be restored to its former power and glory.

SUCH is the distracted state of Hindostan, and so powerful many of the princes who have usurped the power of the king of Delhi, that that potentate cannot, by his  
own



own power and influence, recover his hereditary authority and dominions. But this great object he might attain through the powerful assistance of Great Britain. And that Britain may be induced to afford this assistance, let her be rewarded with a participation in that empire, which her justice shall have restored to the natural sovereign. Let the crown of Great Britain be invested with an independent sovereignty over certain provinces, and let the king of Delhi enjoy, as heretofore, a secure, undisturbed dominion over the rest. Thus the political maxim, *divide et impera*, may be applied in a new sense, but with all its established authority. A mutual alliance and junction of power would render the sovereignty of both the Emperor and Britain permanent in India, and make not only their respective subjects, but tributary princes, happy in the full enjoyment of personal security, and the riches that issue from peace, agriculture, and free commerce. How great the happiness of

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men who had been dragged from their families to war and rapine, and continual subjects of extortion and oppression, when they are enabled to return, without any apprehension of ever being again torn from their families! when they are permitted to enter, in perfect peace and security, upon domestic industry, and to enjoy the full profits of their ingenuity and labour!—Laws that secure such inestimable blessings, must needs be objects of their warmest gratitude. They will teach their children to admire and adore that mild and wise system of government, which, although it originated in usurpation, hath made the arts of peace to rise from the horrors of war. Successive generations will transmit, with their inheritance, sentiments of gratitude to the British nation, which will secure posterity against a fatal encouragement of external invasions or intestine commotions; and the protecting state, regarded, though remote, as a tender parent, will grow great and opulent by the offerings which



which a grateful people will chearfully transmit as an annual tribute, in commemoration of their happy transition from savage anarchy and oppression to the enjoyment of property, liberty, and life.

I am, &c.



## LETTER XXXVI.

To J— M—, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Oct. 17, 1779.

**T**HE great founder of the British power and influence in India, the memorable Lord Clive, procured those vast concessions from SHAH-ALLUM, the present king of Delhi and emperor of Hindostan, which have transformed a Company of merchants into sovereigns of extensive dominions, with a great military regular establishment\*. By one general and three particular Firmaunds, bearing date the 12th of October 1765, the emperor constituted and granted to the

\* The Company's military establishment in Bengal, Madras, Bombay, and Bencoolen, exclusive of their marine, may be computed at one hundred thousand men.

Company,



Company, “ *In consideration of their attachment and services, as faithful servants of the empire, worthy of royal favours, the office of Dewannee of the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, upon condition, expressly, that they engage to become guarantee and security to him, for the punctual payment of an annual tribute of twenty-six lacks of rupees, issuing from the Nabobship of Bengal; of keeping up a large army for the protection of the provinces, and of providing for the expences of the Nizamut; with a perpetual grant of the residue, upon these conditions, to the Company.*” By one other Firmaund of the same date, “ *and for the same considerations,*” confirming a vague and imperfect Sunnud from the deposed nabob Cossim-ali-Cawn, and his successor Meer Jaffier deceased, “ *of the Chuklas of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, and the twenty-four Pergunnahs of Calcutta, in perpetuity.* By another Firmaund, granting and confirming the reversion of Lord Clive’s jaghire in perpetuity to the Company, “ *in consideration of fidelity.*” By another Fir-



maund of the same date, “ *in express consideration of the fidelity and good wishes of the English Company, the emperor grants and confirms the five Northern Circars, on the coast of Golconda and Coromandel, to them.*”

By a solemn treaty, made and concluded the 16th of August 1765, between Sujah-ul-Dowla, nabob of Oude and vizier of the empire, of one part; Nudjum-ul-Dowla, nabob of Bengal, of one other part; and the English East India Company, of the third part; sealed and approved, as a mark of necessary authenticity and form, by his majesty the king of Delhi; in the fourth article it is expressly covenanted and stipulated, “ *That the king Shab Allum shall remain in full possession of Corah, and such parts of the provinces of Illiahabad as he now possesses, which are ceded to his majesty, as a royal demesne, for the support of his dignity and expences.*” And by the eleventh article of the same treaty, the three contracting powers solemnly “ *engage to observe, strictly and sincerely, all the articles contained and settled in the present treaty; that they*  
will



*will not suffer the same to be infringed, directly or indirectly; and that they do and will, generally and reciprocally, guarantee all the stipulations therein."* And lastly, by a solemn agreement made and executed between the king of Delhi and the Company, bearing date the 19th August 1765, "*The Company, in consideration of his majesty having been graciously pleased to grant the Dewannee of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, do engage themselves to be security for the regular and punctual payment of the annual tribute of twenty-six lacks, in the manner, and at the time specifically mentioned.*" That great statesman and soldier who formed these treaties, was guided in this matter as much by a regard to justice as by the love of his country; principles which are by no means incompatible, but rather allied to each other, for as much as the public interest is best consulted by a fair and equitable conduct, on the part of government, towards all nations and all men. It is only by extending and improving the grand idea that seems to have actuated the magnanimous



soul of Lord Clive, when he treated with the king of Delhi, that the British establishments in the east, can be rendered both advantageous and permanent. Friendship and alliance with the emperor should be made the basis of all political arrangements in British Hindostan. But no alliance can be firmly established without reciprocal advantages. To make a treaty with a friendly prince to-day, and to break through the conditions of that treaty to-morrow, is an insult which tends to convert him into an inveterate enemy.

SUCH has been the conduct of the East India Company's servants towards the unfortunate king of Delhi. They have withheld from that prince the stipulated tribute, and sold the province of Illiahabad and Corah to his own prime minister Sujah-ul-Dowla. Yet still they continue to officiate as Dewan, or treasurer, under the grant and appointment of the same king, and to appropriate to their own private use, not only the surplus revenues,



venues, but also his majesty's special reservations for the support of his royal dignity and government.

CAN these acts of flagrant injustice be defended or even palliated on principles of policy or expediency? If there lives a man equal to so arduous a task, it is the present Governor General of Bengal. But even the inventive genius of Mr. Hastings, when he attempts to defend the detention of the king's tribute, and the infamous treaty of *Benaras*\*, labours and is at a loss. The fluency of his diction, the subtilty of his reasoning, the darkness of his insinuations and illusions, avail nothing in to plain a cause. All his reasons for measures so impolitic and unjust, are refuted by preceding, immediate, and subsequent assertions written with his own hand, and still remaining upon the Company's re-

\* The treaty by which the property and possession of the king's provinces in the Duab were conveyed to the nabob of Oude, Sujah-ul-Dowla.



cords. All he alledges in justification of his conduct is, 1st. That the king ought not, on any pretext, to have removed from the ceded provinces; 2d. That he had transferred his right in these provinces to the Mahrattas; and 3d. That the allowing twenty-six lacks of rupees to go annually to Delhi, would prove injurious to the circulation of Bengal.

WITH respect to the first of these arguments: The treaty made by the king with Lord Clive in 1765, is silent as to the place of residence, and therefore implies that *Delhi* or *Agra*, shall naturally continue to be the place of the emperor's abode. Farther, that prince left the ceded provinces with the knowledge and approbation of the Company's governor and council, and was conducted to the frontiers of Corah by their General in Chief, Sir Robert Barker, and Sujah-ul-Dowla, who all of them knew that the king's object was, to recover Delhi from the usurped power of Zabda Cawn, a Rohilla chief; and



and that he had repeatedly solicited the Company's assistance for that purpose.

As to the second: The transfer of his right in the ceded provinces to the Marattas, was not a voluntary deed. That nation extorted a grant of those provinces from him when he was their prisoner. That this grant could not be valid, Mr. Hastings himself allows. In a public letter of the 15th January 1773, he writes, "that the cession of Corah and Illiahabad by the king to the Marrattas, when he was their prisoner, could not be considered as valid, having been forcibly wrested from him." And in another of the 1st March 1773, he says, "In no shape can this compulsory cession from the king release us from the obligation we are under to defend these provinces, which we have so particularly guaranteed to him, and which his viceroy, Moneer-ul-Dowla, at this time puts under our protection. Independent of our own conviction, of the propriety of this plan, your orders in the 5th paragraph  
of



of the 30th June, 1769, in a similar case, leaves us without an option." Nay, he afterwards avowed in council, that in treating with Sujah-ul-Dowla *privately*, he had declared, that, "he was consenting to measures against the peremptory orders of his superiors."

WITH regard to the third pretext, the drawing money from Bengal: In the first place, the sum was not so great as to injure the circulation of Bengal; a truth of which Mr. Hastings seems to have been fully sensible on many occasions, when, instead of *lacks* he sent out of that kingdom *crores*\* of rupees. But the truth is, the money would not have been carried to Delhi: it would have been expended in Bengal on arms, cloathing, provisions, and coarse metals. Besides, in the state of affairs at that time, the intercourses of trade would have brought not only that sum, but as much more, down from the

\* A *lack* of rupees is 100,000 rupees, or 12,500 l. and a *crore* is 100 lacks, or 1,250,000 l.



extremity of the empire, in exchange for the merchandise of the Company's provinces. General Sir Robert Barker, who seems to have understood the whole affair as clearly as he seems also to have understood the true principles of justice and sound policy, opposed Mr. Hastings in council with an honourable firmness, and by solid reasoning. Time will prove, to the utter confusion of the despoilers of treasures, and betrayers of trust, that their cobweb pretences will vanish like smoke before the sunshine of right and reason.

BUT what can be said against the language of the unfortunate king himself, so far back as November 1764, after the battle of Buxar?—Influenced by a dread of the perfidy and ambition of Sujah-ul-Dowla, of which he had had painful experience, he says, “If the English will, contrarily to their interests, make peace with the Vazier †, I will go to Delhi; for I cannot think of returning again into the hands of a

† Sujah-ul-Dowla.



man who has used me so ill. The Rohillas are always enemies to the imperious vizier; *they are my friends.*"—Mr. Hastings being then employed in a high station in Bengal, could not be ignorant either of this remarkable letter, or of the distinguished traits of Sujah-ul-Dowla's character; and, perhaps, it was upon that knowledge that he trusted to make his own fortune by the most easy and rapid means. He laid his plan deep, probed before the lancet, and succeeded. But he amputated!

AMBITIOUS and warlike princes always endeavour to conceal their usurpations under a veil of apparent justice; because other states, alarmed by acts of flagrant injustice, espouse the cause of the injured party, in order to curb the dangerous ambition of a powerful neighbour. But this obvious maxim of policy was overlooked by these clandestine contractors; while the one aimed at the empire of Hindostan, over the neck of his master and sovereign lord;



lord; and the other openly sacrificed the honour and dignity of his nation. On the whole, it is evident, that unless justice be done to the king of Delhi, and honourable reparation made for all his wrongs, the Company have forfeited their office of *Dewan*; that the nabobs of Oude and of Bengal have forfeited their nabobships, their estates, and lives, as traitors to their lawful sovereign; and that the king of Delhi has a fair, legal, incontestible right to transfer the sovereignty of these dominions, together with the arrears due to him from the English Company\*, to the King of Great Britain, as well as

\* The Company's arrears of tribute, with country interest accumulating from the 28th of February 1772 to 28th of February 1781, by annual (not monthly) instalments, will amount to 6,850,000l. sterling: a sum which will greatly exceed the value, or cost, of all their fortifications, cantonments, barracks, and military and ordnance stores, &c.

The arrears, or rather the claim upon the Nabob of Oude, would be about double the above amount, but are irrecoverable.

the



the revenues of Illiahabad and Corah, usurped and collected by the Nabob of Oude since the date of the infamous treaty of Benaras.

I am, &c.

LETTER



L E T T E R XXXVII.

To J—— M——, Esq. London.

Calcutta, October 28, 1779.

A PARTITION of the sovereignty of Hindostan, between Great Britain and the Emperor, and a firm alliance between these powers, would be attended with the greatest advantages to both, and also with tranquillity to all the native princes of India. That the establishment of such a compact and alliance, would be productive of the greatest blessings to all these parties, will not, I imagine, admit of much dispute: but some doubts may arise concerning its practicability. I shall therefore endeavour to shew, that it is not impracticable, and also how it may be effected.

SUCH is the distressed situation of the unfortunate monarch of Delhi, that any conditions may be obtained from him;



but, that a compact between two sovereign powers may be permanent, it is necessary that it be just. Let honour and generosity therefore appear in the formation of a treaty with the Emperor, and good faith in maintaining it.

By a captivating display of all the virtues, acquire the confidence of the native powers of India. There is not in the world, a race of men more grateful for favours than the Hindoos, or who have quicker feelings of right and wrong. Operate on the generous sensibility of their nature. It will not be difficult, by the exercise of humanity and justice, to make them more ambitious of the friendship of Britain, than jealous of its power.

TOWARDS effecting the establishment of two independent sovereignties in Hindostan, it will be necessary to secure the concurrence and co-operation of the *Seiks*, *Jauts*, the scattered *Robilla* tribes, and probably the court of *Poonah*. The three



nations first mentioned, will clearly perceive, in the measure proposed, their own interest; and the Marattas may be induced to agree to it, by rewarding the concessions they may be required to make, by such considerations as may appear to them of the greatest importance. It may be stipulated, that they shall pay no tribute; that all Maratta princes who have of late been injuriously deprived of their property, shall be restored to their hereditary possessions; that the extended dominions of their inveterate enemy, Hyder Ally, shall be retrenched, and his power limited within the bounds of moderation; and that the present establishment of their own government, shall be solemnly ratified and confirmed.

AN association of power being secured in this manner, and by various other means, superior to that of all the remaining states of India, a congress or diet may be confidently assembled, for the avowed purpose



of effecting a revolution on the principles of humanity and justice.

HAVING thus endeavoured to render this plan of peace triumphant over all opposition in India, let us next consider whether it might not be successfully opposed by the jealousy and envy of the commercial nations of Europe.

THE Dutch are not in a condition to thwart the measures of Britain in India, by any power of their own; but they can co-operate with France for the same purpose, so long as that ambitious state has so convenient an establishment in the Indian seas, for carrying on deep and dangerous intrigues, and schemes of conquest and commerce. It will therefore be necessary to remove that impending danger, by the reduction of the islands of *Mauritius* and *Bourbon*, and by simply seizing a possession of right in *Roderigue* and the *Seychell islands*. The possession of *Mauritius* and *Bourbon*,  
will



will prove an acquisition of greater utility than can yet have been conceived in Britain. It will open a new and extensive field for vending the commodities of India to foreigners. It will overthrow all other European establishments in India; and thus secure that country, hitherto so much distracted, from all European intrigues and machinations for the future. It will maintain, without national expence, the possession of islands capable of increasing the national wealth, and of affording more secure, more seasonable, and more plentiful refreshment to the Company's navigation, than St. Helena, Johanna, the Cape of Good Hope, or Madagascar. No consideration whatever should ever induce Great Britain to restore to the French *Pondicherry, Chandernagore, Mabe, or Carriacal.*

THE Portuguese, although the *first European traders* and settlers in Asia, and that they once possessed a most absolute, as well



as a most extensive dominion over the native states, have now no other establishment than Goa on the coast of Malabar; *Damain*, which is almost wholly abandoned, in *Guzzarat*; and the small island of *Macao*, at the mouth of the river of Canton in China. *Bandelle*, upon the river *Houghly*, has been long abandoned; and the Portuguese, having lost their grant, have nothing to shew in support of a claim to it. *Goa* has long been a pernicious receptacle of criminals, idlers, and prostitutes; and serves, under the cloak of religion, as a sanctuary to murderers and assassins; which encourages the commission of every crime which resentment, revenge, and every outrageous passion can suggest, to the motley offspring of original Portuguese and *Hallachores*\*, diversified by indiscriminate intercourse with all the nations who, since the discovery of the passage by the Cape, have visited the coasts

\* Wretched outcasts from every tribe or caste in India.



of Hindostan. The colour of that generation is not now to be distinguished from that of the *Parria* tribe †; but petticoats, and crosses suspended from the necks of the females as signals of familiar access, guide Europeans to their embraces; whence springs a species of people of a fairer outside, but with minds, if possible, still more diabolical.

THIS mixed race, from the causes I have now mentioned, have spread amazingly over all the European establishments, and are the most treacherous, dangerous, and in every respect, the worst people in India. It is impossible to reform them by education, by admonition, or by example. They should therefore receive every possible political discountenance ‡.

† The same with the Hallachores,

‡ It is remarkable, that the offspring of Europeans by Moorish women, differ very materially from the detestable race I have now described, both in their principles and natural dispositions.



THE establishment of Goa, instead of yielding either public or private revenues, is a dead weight upon the incumbered state of Portugal; and if the court of Lisbon were not restrained by pride, they would surrender it with pleasure to any other power, and esteem that deprivation no small advantage. As to *Macao*, it is in reality under Chinese government, though nominally Portuguese. It exists by the occasional use which is made of its ports and warehouses by other European nations: and this is owing to the diffidence of the Chinese in European principles, and the restraint which they consequently impose on all European commerce\*.

THE Danish East India Company having sold their possessions to the king of Denmark, the trade to India is laid open to individuals.] The settlements of *Tranque-*

\* It is remarkable, that Europeans consider the Chinese, as the most disingenuous and perfidious people in the world; and that the Chinese, in their turn, declare they can place no trust in an European



*bar* on the Coromandel coast, and of *Seram-pore* on the river *Houghly*, are too inconsiderable to be regarded in the light of rivals to those of England. They would insensibly dissolve and die away, if their trade were not carried on as remittances of British fortunes to Europe. Let but the two independent sovereignties here recommended, be established, and the half-mouldered walls of *Tranquebar* and *Seram-pore* will, within a few years, sink down into rubbish, or become an easy purchase for the sake of above 30,000 useful manufacturers\*.

THE English East India Company should, for many and obvious reasons, obtain, by all amicable means, from the Portuguese, their pretensions to the *Niccabar* Islands.

THE injustice done to Mr. William Bolts, in refusing to his British creditors, after he was declared a bankrupt in Eng-

\* Who lived in *Tranquebar*, or in adjacent villages.



land, the benefit and indulgence of the Company's constitution, that they might recover to their own uses, the debts owing to him by natives, under pretence that the trade whereby the debts were contracted, was contrary to the Company's bye-laws \*, will vindicate, on his part, the indulgence of a disposition naturally vindictive, while he wreaks his vengeance at the only period, and in the only place where his knowledge and genius were able to gain credit and confidence. Driven to the last extremity of distress, he was supported by British subjects in London: patronised by them, he offered his services to the court of Lisbon; but they were not accepted. Disappointed in his views in Portugal, he accidentally procured a commission from the court of Vienna, to form commercial establishments in Asia. A speculative, inventive, and persevering ge-

\* There was a palpable impropriety in a high and respectable corporation's descending to shew personal resentment against an alien, who had been forced to dismiss himself from their service, and had been disgracefully removed from their settlements for notorious offences.



nus, like Mr. Bolts, might have succeeded in the character of coadjutor to M. St. Lubin, in his negotiations for France with the Marrattas and Hyder Ally, and have formed a coalition between the German Emperor and the king of France, dangerous, in the highest degree, to the British interest in Hindostan. But, as a speculative merchant, he must have sunk under accumulated losses and charges, and could never have returned to Leghorn, Triest, or Vienna, had not some of the principal members of the Company's own government in Bombay and Madras, furnished him with the means of sending proofs of his abilities, and of the performance of his promises, in three large ships completely laden, under imperial colours, into the Mediterranean. With this countenance and assistance, he has erected about six flag staffs, on which imperial colours are occasionally displayed on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel; the Car-Niccabars claimed by Denmark, and Rio-de-la Goa, on the south-east coast of Africa. The



## 412 TRAVELS in

assistance afforded to Mr. Bolts, by the Company's servants, and creditable houses in trade under the Company's protection, was a direct violation of positive orders from the Court of Directors, which were published in the several presidencies. A conduct so injurious, and even so insolent, calls aloud for censure. To deprive the delinquents of their offices, would be the most mild, and at the same time the most effectual method of defeating the success of Mr. Bolts's schemes and operations in Hindostan hereafter; and at the same time, of rendering persons in the service, or under the protection of the East India Company, more tender of breaking through their orders, and sacrificing their political rights in future.

I am, &c.

LETTER



L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To J—— M——, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Oct. 23, 1779.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

**T**HE great number of these letters which you will receive at the same time, will give you some idea of my present manner of life, which is sedentary; and, from disappointments in my original objects in coming hither, principally dedicated to enquiries concerning this country, and the speculations which I transmit in such abundance to you, Sir, and through your hands to Mr. R. W. and others of our friends, who are much interested in the affairs of India.—Probably, some of my ideas may appear to my friends chimerical. I am not insensible that I am  
animated



animated by a degree of enthusiasm on the subject of these letters. To be in any degree instrumental in the establishment of justice, and all the concomitant arts and blessings of peace, in this populous and much-injured country; to open a few hints, which, duly improved, might lead Great Britain to the highest pitch of prosperity and glory, is a transporting pursuit, which naturally rouses and warms the mind. Many things are to be changed, I acknowledge, before the object of that pursuit can be attained: and projected political changes are generally stigmatized with the epithet *romantic*. But though some political projects may be romantic, all are not such. To reject any scheme, on pretence that it is wholly visionary, is the ordinary refuge of indolent minds, unwilling to take the trouble of examining it closely, and in all its parts.

POLITICAL have often been compared to natural bodies; and the analogy between them



them is very striking in many respects. But there is this remarkable difference, that a decay in the political is more easily cured than a consumption in the natural body. If we examine modern as well as antient history, we shall find, that wisdom and sound policy have *in fact* effected more difficult, but never more glorious revolutions, than it is in the power of Great Britain to bring about in the great peninsula of Hindostan. Have patience with me, my good friend, while I go on a little farther, with a plan for settling the affairs of India; and in return for this indulgence, I promise you by and by, a series of more entertaining letters.

HAVING already given a sketch of the plan I propose, I come now to fill it up, by drawing various lines, which may serve to describe and limit the different rights and pretensions of all the powers of Hindostan, whether supreme or subordinate.

IT



It is proposed then, that the revenues of the Hindostan empire shall be raised from the provinces of *Delhi*, *Agra*, *Ajmere*, &c. &c. which may be called a part of the proper imperial demesne; from a renewed cession of the province of *Corah*, and such parts of the *Illiahabad* province as lie west of the river *Tonse*, or *Serong*; and from a cession, on favourable and honourable conditions to the original chiefs and their descendants of such parts of the *Robillcund* territories as are situated between the *Ganges* and the *Jumna*; together with such tributes from the other tributary states as shall support and maintain on a liberal scale the government and dignity of the empire, as well by means of that influence which naturally attends sovereignty and wealth, as by the terror of its arms, in cases of rebellion, or of depredation by subordinate princes, on each other.

THAT



THAT the crown of Great Britain shall be invested with an independent sovereignty over the provinces of *Bengal*, *Babar*, and *Orissa*, and the zemindary occupied by the Rajah *Cheytsing* of *Gauzipore*; *Caunpore*, *Benaras*, &c. with all their rights, properties, prerogatives, privileges, emoluments, immunities, and dependencies, with the sovereignty of the hilly province of *Gatac*, and of all the east coast of the peninsula, from the province of *Midnapore* in Bengal, to Cape *Comorin*, comprehending the northern *Circars*, the *Carnatic*, *Tanjore*, and *Madura*; without invading the rights of nabobs, rajahs, and other legal possessors, according to their original tenures, as feudatories, tributaries, or dependents of the empire; and without violating religious tenets, customs, or castes, which are not derogatory to the principles of humanity and the laws of nature. That the crown of Great Britain shall also receive quiet and undisturbed possession of all seas, and practicable bays and

VOL. I.                      E e                      inlets,



inlets, from *Ajengo* to the river *Indus*, except those already actually occupied by the Dutch and Portuguese, together with the sovereignty of the islands of *Bombay*, *Salsette*, and *Caranjar*, the promontory of *Basseen* and *Surat* with all its original appendages.—

That the Maratta states and Hyder Ally, as well as the several other princes who possess the Malabar and Guzzarat coasts, shall yield up to Britain all their sea-ports and naval armaments, never to be re-established; but that it shall be lawful to employ unarmed vessels for the benefit and ease of trade. That the British Sovereign shall solemnly engage to keep, at all times, a naval establishment on the coast, sufficient to protect the navigation, trade, and coasts of Hindostan. And that the states surrendering *Basseen* and *Caranjar*, the sea-ports, towns, and all the dependencies of *Surat*, shall receive such an annual subsidy, as shall be deemed reasonable, after making an adequate allowance for their proportions of the benefits to accrue from the  
naval



naval establishment\* to be supported by Britain. That for the more effectual and permanent maintenance of the navy, the native princes shall engage to supply the British Government, for ever, with all the teak-wood which their countries produce more than is necessary for their own private occasions, upon paying a certain stipulated price for the same on delivery thereof, upon such parts of the sea-beach as are accessible to vessels proper for carrying it off.—That in consideration of the cession of *Catac*, and as an equivalent to the *Nizam* or *Soubah* of *Deccan*, for relinquishing the claim to quit-rent from the five northern Circars, and for the sovereignty of them thus conveyed to the crown of Britain, that crown shall engage to pay the emperor an annual subsidy of

\* The natural revenues belonging to the establishment of Surat, when originally vested in the Company; those of Salfette, Basseen, Carajan, Choul, Carawar, Geriah, Mangaloor, &c. would greatly exceed every probable establishment of a very respectable marine.



thirty lacks of Sicca rupees: which subsidy shall be paid in British and India merchandize to the value of 20 lacks, and the remaining 10 lacks in the current money of Bengal. That the emperor shall constitute a complete military brigade under a British commandant, staff and officers, to be continually stationed in the Duab and Rohilcund: the establishment of which shall not be less than 30 lacks a year, to be paid by the emperor in the current coins, with proper allowances for differences in the exchange, by *Tuncars* or assignments on certain parcels of the revenues of those provinces \*.—That the King of Britain shall station a brigade of at least equal force in the province of *Babar*, and the zemindary of *Cheytsing*; another in *Bengal*; two under the presidency of *Ma-*

\* It is understood that the emperor shall have other military establishments proportioned to his revenues; and that the military establishments of the other states shall be regulated by the general system.



*dras*, and one under that of *Bombay*: the whole to act at all times in concert with those of the emperor, and as allies offensive and defensive, as well to repel invasions, as to preserve the peace of all Hindostan, and to secure to each separate state, the quiet and uninterrupted enjoyment of such territories and rights as shall be ascertained by the general establishment.

THAT the nabob of *Oude* shall be restricted to his paternal inheritance; be excluded for ever from *Cheytsing's* country; and that he shall pay a fixed annual tribute to the emperor.—That the original *Robilla* chiefs be restored to the possession of all *Robilcund*, as tributaries of the empire; but that they shall pay quit-rents as zemindars, for lands lying in the *Duab*, while in every other respect they shall enjoy the privileges and dignities of mesne lords; and as to the provinces lying north-east of the Ganges, and south-west of the *Jumna*, that they shall enjoy them, on paying



tribute, as feudatories of the empire.—

That the *Jauts* shall acknowledge themselves feudatories, and pay a small annual tribute towards the general protection.—

That the *Seiks* shall enter into the general alliance, offensive and defensive, as an independent state.—That the provinces of

*Bundelcund*, those of *Gohud*, those of *Berar*, the soubah of the *Deccan*, the kingdom of *Mysore* and its dependencies, the rajahships of *Samorine*, *Colastria*, *Bednure*, *Sounda*, *Malawar*\*, &c. shall be declared subject to the empire, and shall pay tribute.—

That the *Maratta* state, with all its dependencies, shall hold of the empire, and enter into the general alliance, offensive and defensive, with separate stipulations†.

—That the kingdom of *Travancore*, and the several petty states on the peninsula,

\* These and all other rajahships to be restored to their respective lawful princes.

† They shall pay no tribute; but they shall quit claim to chout, beyond their own and subordinate territories.

which



which are at present free from all superiority, shall be declared feudatories of the empire.—And that every endeavour be used, to unite in the grand alliance proposed, the king of *Candy*, and the northern tribe of the people of the island of *Ceylon*, but without submitting them to any charge or tribute: an object probably of great future utility, and which, by operating on their desires of emancipation from the Dutch government, might easily be effected.

It is farther proposed, That all the articles which relate to commerce, shall be digested with peculiar attention and deliberation.—That the inland trade shall be as free as circumstances will permit; that the coasting trade be laid under certain political restrictions; that the export trade, not coast-wise, be carried on with special clearances and passports from the English Company on the British government.—That the king of *Persia* and the *Lama* of *Thibet*, be invited to accede to a general

E e 4                      alliance



alliance of mutual friendship, and free intercourse of trade, with the emperor of Hindostan and the king of Britain.—That every possible encouragement be given to commercial intercourse by the *Indus*, the *Jumna*, the *Ganges*; and over land with *Candabar*, *Cassimere*, and other parts of Persia, with the *Seiks*, *Affghans*, and other natives inhabiting the countries lying between Persia and Tibet.—That a communication be opened between the interior provinces, particularly *Rungpore*, through *Napal*, with Tibet, for fine wool, gold, and horses, in exchange for British woollens and the manufactures of India.—To establish a port and dock at *Chattigong*, or to obtain, by a fair treaty, some secure port, and also teak-wood, from the king of *Pegu*\*.—To obtain a right, by assignment from the crown of Denmark, in the *Nic-*

\* Teak-wood may be got in abundance, and cheap, from either coast of Sumatra; most probably from the Andaman, and certainly from the Niccabar islands.



*cabar* islands, which will serve as places for the accommodation of vessels, for making shell-lime, for furnishing building timber, and for establishing an useful branch of commerce in beetle-nuts, cocoanuts, ambergris, and probably some other profitable commodities.

AND lastly, it is proposed, That all controversies between the subordinate princes of India, be referred for ultimate decision, to the emperor of Hindostan and the British viceroy representing the majesty of Great Britain; or by a general diet to be held triennially, alternately at *Delhi* and *Calcutta*; and that all the contracting powers of Hindostan shall conjunctly and severally guarantee to each other, and enforce the strict and faithful observance and performance of all the articles, conditions, and stipulations literally expressed, or plainly implied in the words of the grand treaty: so that the meaning of what may appear doubtful, may be construed agreeably



ably to the fair and unconstrained principles of equity, justice, and the preservation of peace.

I am, &c.

LETTER



LETTER XXXIX.

To J—— M——, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Oct. 25, 1779.

**I**T is a fact of notoriety, that the East-India Company's navigation is conducted upon principles detrimental to themselves, and unserviceable to the nation; and under so little authority or subordination, that the command of a ship is considered merely as a job to accommodate the man who purchases the command of her \*. The covenants of a charter-party,

\* The report of the Committee of the House of Commons in 1773, founded upon the clear evidence and accurate computations of Mr. Snodgrafs, the Company's surveyor of shipping, Mr. Cole, their freight accomptant, Sir Richard Hotham, John Durand, Esq. and Sir Charles Raymond, shew the abuses and losses, and demonstrate the propriety of new modelling the Company's navigation on a system entirely new. Government having the means of information on its highest record, the reform is within their knowledge, nor can it be effectual but by that superior power.

the



the orders of the Court of Directors, and the controlling authority vested in the presidencies abroad, have so little authority or influence over masters of ships (where the service or interest of their employers interfere with their private emoluments) that they scarcely become an object of momentary attention. The death of seamen, and of the Company's recruits; delays in bringing cargoes to the markets of Europe; intire losses of valuable cargoes; a total neglect of each other in the greatest distress; an improper stowage of the Company's goods, arising from sinister views of private trade; all these evils are incurred by the Company's ship-masters, for the sake of procuring a market for a few groce of wine and porter, or for the conveniency of a passenger who pays handsomely for an apartment, and the stowage of a long list of packages.

It has been said, that the Company, instead of chartering ships, intend to entertain



tain a navy. I am fully persuaded, that such a measure might be so conducted, as to be useful, in a high degree, to themselves, and still more so to the nation. The enormous magnitude of wealth and commerce, which the East-India possessions, trade, and navigation, promise to pour into Britain, must interest the British legislature so heartily in India affairs, as to make them a primary object of ministerial attention. It will of course become an important political object, to establish a marine for the service of the East-India Company; which will be maintained at less than one half of the expence incurred by the crown, with not more than a tenth part of that loss of British seamen, which is sustained by the present system; and which, at the same time, will have a greater influence on the minds of the native princes, and also extend greater protection and security to those dominions and that commerce, which a royal navy is now destined to protect and succour. Thus  
may



may the national expence be diminished, without a reduction of its naval power, or even an encrease of the charges of the East-India Company. If such a system shall be adopted, whether by chance, or from a conviction of its utility, it will naturally follow, that Bombay shall be made the principal dock and yard; that there shall be another for ship-building in Surat; and that the Company shall have a repairing dock and naval yard on the Thames. By sending from Britain all the heavy iron-work of the shipping, cordage, sail-cloth\*, anchors, blocks, and ship-chandlery articles, the British manufactures will be encouraged as much as they are at present. A great national benefit will arise from the saving of heavy timber for the use of the royal navy, and the general system will operate as a new mode

\* If it should be thought political, there is not a doubt but hemp may be had in abundance from the province of Bahar, and the Ceytsing zemindary. This would reduce the import of that article from Russia.



of clear remittances to Britain, while it will render her less dependent not only on Sweden and Norway, but also on North America.

As it would be unjust not to continue in pay, or to purchase from the owners, those ships which were built, and constantly employed, on the faith of the Company's trade flowing through the usual channel of conveyance, matters must be so managed, that new ships shall be built in the East only at stated periods; and if the number of ships built there, cannot keep pace with the calls of trade, and the discharge of contract ships in regular rotation, the deficiency must be made up, either by ships built in the Company's dock in London, or by country ships purchased in India; a circumstance very unlikely, however, to happen, as it is almost certain, that at Bombay and Surat, six, seven, or even eight complete ships may be built annually for the first  
term



term of eight years †. This period would complete the existing contracts: and thus, before the temporary ships built or bought for the Company would be out of their service, a new marine would be completed of the hard, incorruptible wood, and the staunch manufactures of Hindostan. This kind of wood, to which I now allude, is not only remarkable for resisting the destructive effects of sea and land vermin, but it is even proof against cannon-balls. Such vessels, therefore, are not only more fit to run from ten to fifteen voyages to and from Europe, than ships built in that quarter of the world; but they also yield more confident security against the attacks of enemies.

† After the completion of the number, it may be presumed, that one, or at most two new ships annually, would uphold the establishment; and, besides employing the artificers, and operating as a beneficial remittance, it would be serving the nation essentially, that the Company should build two line of battle ships, and one or two frigates annually, at a stated price, to be accounted for by government in the territorial claim.

THESE



THESE ships should be so constructed in form and strength, as to be capable of mounting, on any emergency, from 56 to 64 guns, of twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four pounders; and particular attention should be paid to those destined for the Bengal trade, whose draught of water must necessarily lessen their bulk. They should also be constructed for the purpose of fast-sailing.

As improvements of all kinds, which are not easily incorporated with old, may, without difficulty or danger, be adopted in the formation of a new system, the East-India Company's marine might be constituted on a plan infinitely more perfect than that of any naval establishment existing. For this purpose, the Company should avail themselves of all the genius and experience, both of their own and other countries.

SHOULD the establishment of an East-India marine ever become an object



of serious deliberation, I should humbly submit to the consideration of the Company, the observations I have already made in this letter, and also the following proposals.

THAT seamen in the East-India Company's service shall, at all times, be exempted from being impressed into the royal navy ;—that an hospital shall be established in Britain, into which seamen maimed, or otherwise disabled in the service, shall find an asylum for life, and into which the Poplar hospital shall be incorporated ;—that seamen, serving faithfully for a certain number of years, shall, if incapable of further laborious service, be entitled to that asylum ;—that one or other hospital for disabled Lascars, Portuguese, and marine Sepoys, be constituted on the island of Bombay ;—that to the end such seamen may meet with due encouragement on the one side, and the Company's service be regularly and effectually performed at a reasonable rate, in proportion



tion to the advantages and security which it offers, on the other; parliament shall indulge the Company with an exclusive exercise of such marine bye-laws as shall not violate the sacred principles of the British constitution, but which may have the happy tendency to reduce that useful class of people to a state of temperance, obedience, and duty;—that one third part of the complement of every ship's company, stationed in India, shall consist of Lascars and native Portuguese; and that the marines serving on board shall be composed of such sepoys as have resolution to overcome, without the exercise of compulsion, their native superstitious prejudices\*: a measure not only salutary to the Europeans serving in those warm climates on board the same ships, but particularly

\* An establishment of a corps of sepoy marines may become the most useful body of men in India, as they will at all times be equally capable of serving on land, and ready to go by sea from one presidency to another, for defence, or to go upon any foreign expedition; which the generality of sepoy corps will not readily do, if at all.



saving to the Company's finances, and their provisions †.

THAT the masters and officers shall wear an uniform, and have rank in times of war, or on military service in India; that they shall rise by gradations to the highest stations (except that of an admiral, who shall always be an officer of that rank in the royal navy, and be vested with the chief command of the stationary naval establishment for three years, or until relieved) with a constant power of reservation in favour of superior merit, and an exception to persons declared incompetent.

THAT, as the ship's admeasurements are always a strong presumptive proof of what their holds, &c. ought to contain, in order to prevent abuses, every package shipped, either in Europe or Asia, shall be measured by a sworn officer; or that packages

† The monthly expence of a Lascar sailor in India, including his provisions, will not exceed 20 shillings.



shall be made of certain established dimensions, that when the lading is completed, the quantum on that officer's book shall stand as a cheque on the ship's officers in stowing the cargo. Allowances may be made for goods that are not measurable in packages by stated rules\*.—That the captain and each officer shall give in fair and correct journals of every voyage, describing the courses, currents, variations of the compass, bearings of head-lands, eminences, points, bays, &c. soundings, and such remarks as may tend to afford additional knowledge

\* It is notorious, that ships can carry a larger quantity of tons in merchandize than the carpenter's admeasure-ment, and that this proportion increases more in large than in small vessels. Experience will prove a guide, as well as a cheque on the stowage. On this principle, and the rule of practice, the Company's freight may be brought home considerably under 20l. per ton on an average, for all their investments, which generally cost them, with demorrage, &c. above 38l. per ton. Mr. Snodgrass estimates at 32l. exclusive of demorrage, and the demorrage may be computed at 54,000l. annually on an average, equal to a fifth part of the chartered and surplus tonnage freight, which on an average of 20 years, from 1753 to 1772, amounted to 291,482l.



of winds, currents, shoals, and coasts; and that persons, properly qualified, shall be appointed to revise and examine these journals, in order to extract such new information as they may be found to contain, of public utility. — That the Company shall be constrained to bear the charge of two small vessels, completely provided with navigators, astronomers' instruments, and other necessaries, for surveying with precision and accuracy, the coasts, and examining the changes and courses of currents, from the Cape of Good Hope to China, and thence by the island of Seram, and the Moluccas, to the south-west extremity of Madagascar;—and that such useful improvements as the Dutch and French have established in their trading ships, for the more perfect accommodation of officers and seamen, as well as in the art of navigation, shall be adopted.

THAT in time of profound peace in Europe, the Company shall maintain a navy, to consist of four ships of the line,



as many stout frigates, and six fast-sailing armed packets, besides three packets constantly communicating between the Cape of Good Hope (as the residence of an agent) and St. Helena, and occasionally with Britain and India.

THAT in case of a French, Dutch, or Spanish war, or open hostility, the Company shall entertain ten ships of the line \*, and as many capital frigates, besides the ordinary establishment of country and St. Helena packets, with their proper complement of seamen, &c.

IN further consideration whereof, and of the management and useful provision made for seamen in the Company's service, that the government shall relinquish its claim to Greenwich hospital money from all their seamen; and shall furthermore, by

\* These will serve also as convoys to and from Europe, provided that squadrons of the royal navy cruize for them off the Azores, and accompany them out as far as Madeira, or clear of the Bay of Biscay.



law, enable the Company to retain and deduct after the rate of five per cent. on all wages, rating all degrees of persons according to the standard wages of able seamen, to accumulate as a fund, and to be vested in trustees, with the powers of a body corporate.

THAT every mariner maimed in action, or by accident, in the execution of duty, or who shall, for seven years successively, serve in the Company's marine, and allow the five per cent. rate; or who in their service, by age or natural infirmity, is rendered incapable of further service, shall be entitled to the asylum of the Company's hospital for the remainder of his natural life; and that the widows and children of seamen, in these circumstances, shall be provided for ‡.

‡ Widows may be usefully employed as nurses, &c. in hospitals; children (male) put to common schools within the hospital, until qualified to become apprentices to the sea, to sail-makers, caulkers, block-makers, rope-makers, blacksmiths, &c. afterwards they may serve the Company.

THAT



THAT seamen thus disabled and pensioned, having wives or children, may, at their option, withdraw with their wives and children, and in lieu of pension in the public hospital, receive forty shillings per quarter, sending regular certificates.

THAT the wages and effects of run seamen, of persons dying without known kindred, and generally, all marine forfeitures in the sea service, shall be appropriated to this fund, with reasonable reservations to favour legal claimants.

THAT the surplus or unappropriated monies which have arisen from the interest of Lord Clive's bounty, shall be ceded to this fund; the concurrence of the present Lord Clive, and the release of his reversionary claim, being obtained.

THAT a benefaction of 500l. to this hospital, shall intitle the donor, during life, to one vote in all questions and elections in the India-House, as a proprietor



tor of stock; for a benefaction of 1000*l*. two votes, together with an exclusive privilege, in either case, to vote by proxy.

**THAT** governors, presidents, counsellors, and captains of capital ships, shall, on their appointments to these stations, engage to sink certain proportional sums in this fund; and that agents for the sale of prizes in time of war, shall account to the trustees for a certain proportion of their commission, to be sunk into this fund.

**THAT** as reduced seamen, although unfit for heavy labour on ship-board, may nevertheless be capable of useful services and labour on shore; and as superannuated officers may find easy retreats in superintending different departments in the public hospital, there shall be established, within the precincts thereof, an academy for the instruction of children of invalids and Company's seamen, and orphans, in the theory and practice of navigation, &c.  
and



and that a rope-work and sail-makers loft shall be constructed, and block-makers, oakham-pickers, &c. be appointed for the use of the Company's marine; which would considerably lighten the charges of the hospital\*.

I am, &c. &c.

\* On a loose calculation it has been computed, that after a certain term, this public-spirited and charitable institution would give comfortable protection to more than one thousand pensioners constantly, besides that it would be a nursery for youths for the sea, and professions relating thereto.

LETTER



## LETTER XL.

To J— M—, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Oct. 29, 1779.

THE island of *Mauritius* is situated in the 20th degree of south latitude, and 56 east longitude from London. It is of a circular figure, mountainous in the centre, and flat around the coast, containing about 100,000 English acres. The soil is light and but unkindly, of a brick-colour, and in some parts strongly impregnated with iron ore. There are some large rivers, which rise at the bottom or in the sides of the mountains. There is not above one fifth part of the country under cultivation, the remaining four being mountainous or filled with woods. There is on this island some good building timber, and a great deal of yellow, black, and party-



party-coloured ebony. This last species of ebony is reckoned to be, of value, and is never burnt, as the others frequently are. There is a smelting manufactory for the iron ore, and some powder mills. There are in Mauritius two or three sugar-plantations, several coffee-plantations, and it has produced very good cotton and indigo: it is indeed to these two last-mentioned commodities that the soil seems best adapted. All the tropical fruits, plants, and roots, are raised here; but they are neither so luxuriant nor so highly flavoured as those of Bourbon, nor so abundant as to serve the inhabitants four months in the year: their supplies for about eight months in twelve come from Bourbon, the Cape of Good Hope, Batavia, and Europe.

THE spiceries of Ceylon, Amboyna, and Banda, promise to flourish in this island. In the parish of Pamplemonse, the king of France maintains, at a considerable expence, and in good condition, a spacious botanical garden, divided into four parts, representing



senting the great quarters of the earth; in which the trees, shrubs, plants, flowers, herbs, roots, &c. of each are respectively planted; pieces of wood being fixed in the ground by each, describing its name, native country, and qualities. In this garden cinnamon and cloves thrive amazingly. All around the island (except small inlets opposite to some bays) at a tolerable distance from the shore, there is a reef of coral rock, which shelters the intermediate space of water, makes it quite smooth and serene, and prevents the formation of such heavy surges as, rolling and breaking on the shore, might render landing difficult, if not impracticable.

THE fields and woods abound with deer, hares, rabbits, and flying game. The inhabitants are remarkable for their hospitality, and the ladies who are natives of this island, for their beauty.

MAURITIUS is the metropolis of the French African islands, the chief seat of government,



government, the emporium of commerce, and the asylum of exiles from France. The inhabitants are not so independent in their circumstances, nor so easy in their minds as those of Bourbon, although they affect more dress and gaiety, and have better houses and furniture. Every third person you meet of a fair complexion, wears at his button-hole the order of St. Louis.

As the position of the town of Port Louis, and the fortifications defending the entrance of the harbour, are well known, I shall not give any particular description of them. I cannot, however, but observe, that the practice of warping ships into that port, is merely a political stratagem, intended to impress the world with a notion that it is of the most difficult access. The passage for ships is clear and easy, and every afternoon during the 28 days I was there, there was a constant steady and brisk gale directly into the harbour.



THE island of *Bourbon* is situated in the 21st degree of south latitude, and 54th east longitude from London. Its figure is nearly circular. Perhaps there is not a spot on the face of the earth so worthy of the attention of naturalists as this island. It contains three high mountains, which are often seen at the distance of 30 leagues: and are the highest land I ever saw, except the Pike of Teneriffe. On the summit of one of these mountains, which is in the south-east quarter of the island, there is a volcano which frequently emits smoke, flames, and ashes. This volcano exhibits an awful but beautiful prospect at night, when it vomits flames, and fills the surrounding heavens with particles of fire. Of the three mountains of Bourbon, this alone is barren and uninhabited. The mountain which is reputed the highest, rises in the centre of the island, and to the northward of it appears a ridge of hills, called the *Falaises*, one side of which, bold, abrupt, and sublime, forms a stupendous precipice, in perpendicular  
height



height two thousand French fathoms, overhanging a large river, which sometimes glides smoothly along, and at others falls in rough cascades. In respect of size, Bourbon is nearly equal to Mauritius. The soil, which is in some parts black, and in others gray, is superlatively fruitful, and improves in quality in proportion as it approaches even to the tops of eminences and mountains. The windward side, and the quarter of St. Lusan on the east side, are level lands watered by very fine rivers, particularly the great river *d'Abord*, which precipitates itself into a district the most beautiful of the whole island, but where the landing from the sea is difficult and full of danger.

IN the latitude of 21 degrees this island produces wheat, cabbages, turnips, carrots, artichokes, pease, beans, and garden fruits and roots equal in size and flavour to any I ever saw in Europe. It produces also the sugar-cane, coffee, cotton, indigo, and all West India fruits, superior to any I ever



saw in any of the American islands. Its rice is not inferior to that of either Carolina; and its mangoes are equal to any in Hindostan. The poultry are the largest I ever saw, and in every respect excell those of all other countries.

THE ladies of Bourbon are remarkably tall, and elegantly formed; their complexions beautifully red and white, and their features the most delicate and handsome that can be imagined. In figure, complexion, and features, the men resemble the women, only that the former are more muscular.—I dwell a little on the extraordinary beauty of the natives of the island of Bourbon, because it is a very singular circumstance, to find elegance of shape, delicacy of features, and bloom of complexion, in the torrid zone.

THE pasturage of this island is not well adapted to the breed of sheep, but it abounds with goats, small horned cattle, and small hardy horses. The inhabitants  
of



of Bourbon are still more hospitable than those of Mauritius. They are frank, chearful, and polite with more sincerity. Every repast begins with a glass of brandy, and the tables are plentiful and elegant, being furnished with butcher's meat, and a great variety of fowls, fish, and vegetables.

BUT the enjoyments of the gay and social inhabitants of this enchanting isle, are mixed with sufferings unknown in the most barren and inhospitable countries. Contented and happy in the company of one another, they might well despise that contempt in which they are held by the *poor noblesse* of Mauritius, because forsooth they are not, in general, of noble extraction: but they suffer severer misfortunes in that iron government under which they live; the depredations of their rebellious runaway slaves, who occupy some of the inaccessible mountains; but above all,



in those frequent hurricanes which ravage their country from January to April or May.

THE distance from Bourbon to Mauritius is about 37 leagues, which is run from the latter to the former in the space of from eighteen to twenty-four hours : but to return to Mauritius from Bourbon takes up a month, at the least fourteen days, unless in the hurricane season, when the wind is more variable.

THE *Seychell* or *Mabé* islands lie a few leagues north-east from the north end of Madagascar. The French took possession of them since the last war, and stationed in them a party of soldiers. They were before uninhabited. They yield some tropical provisions, and a great many turtle, with other fish.

IN the island of *Seychell* there is a very safe and commodious deep bay, with excellent



cellent anchorage, where ships may wood and water with great ease and safety.

AT a very short distance, I believe less than a league from the island of *Seychell*, lies that of *Prasline*. The soil of each is represented as excellent; the land throughout is flat, and is said to grow some large timber proper for building. These islands are remarkable for producing the tree which yields a kind of cocoa-nut, representing, in the most striking manner, the figure of a human breech, thighs, &c. having a foetid smell from an aperture of the fundament, like that of human excrement. The Indians, struck with this resemblance, formerly set an enormous value upon these nuts; but since the French traders furnished the market with them more plentifully, they have lost much of their estimation, together with their rarity.

As these islands are capable of raising abundance of provisions, sheep, goats, and horned cattle, a settlement might



be made on them, very convenient for the English East India Company, if this passage should be adopted by their navigation at those seasons when the inner passage between Madagascar and the continent is impracticable.

I am, &c,

LETTER



LETTER XLI.

To J— M—, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Nov. 2, 1779.

THE French African islands may be made useful to the English East India Company, and the British nation, in various respects, and the inhabitants at the same time rendered more happy than they ever were, or can be, under their own government. Such of the productions of these islands as are proper for the India market, might be transported thither in return for rice, cotton, cloths of all qualities, wrought silks, and some slaves. The ebony might be sent to the China market, India, and Europe. The other articles proper for exportation might be sent to the British market, under the same restrictions and imposts that are laid on the produce



produce of the British colonies in America, in ships chartered by the East India Company, or registered in their name. These islands would serve as places of refreshment, out and home, and for supplying ships with cattle, hogs, poultry, vegetables, roots, fruits, flour, and biscuit, all of the best quality, and excellent water.

THE island of Mauritius, as I have hinted in a former letter, may be made a free port, for the sale of India goods, on such conditions as to secure a constant mart for India manufactures; to supply the Company's dominions with a sufficient quantity of bullion; to raise a capital revenue, by an impost to the Company; to procure easy and sure remittances both to the Company and to individuals; to secure the English dominions in India against French intrigues and invasions; and in general, to improve the wealth which Britain has a right to claim from its possessions in the eastern hemisphere.

BUT



BUT you will doubtless observe, that it is more easy to point out the advantages Great Britain might reap from the possession of these islands, than to point out a mode by which that possession might be acquired.—I am well informed that the inhabitants of Mauritius and Bourbon are by no means well affected to the French government; and that they have the highest notions of that liberty and happiness which is enjoyed under that of Britain.—In order to acquire the sovereignty of the French African islands, it will be proper for Great Britain to improve this disposition in the natives; to cultivate their good-will and attachment, first, by inviolable assurances of protecting their lives and properties by the freedom of a mild and just political constitution; secondly, by proposing to their voluntary acceptance, a plan of a temperate and just civil government; thirdly, as the French are in general averse from drinking strong wines, to promise them a special indulgence of importing French wines, in registered ships,



ships, or those of the East India Company, on express conditions of their paying a certain duty to the crown; fourthly, to obviate all difficulties arising from the necessary stoppage of the paper currency now in circulation\*; fifthly, to give freedom to *absent*, commonly called *run-away* slaves, who shall assist in the reduction, and who shall submit to certain conditions, to remain obligatory on them and

\* It is possible to do this, by purchasing, at a medium price or rate of exchange, the paper currency for the last eighteen months; by forthwith calling in the whole of the notes, and only receiving such as were in actual circulation before the siege; by issuing others on the credit of the conquerors in their stead.—It will be farther necessary, that commissaries be appointed by the conquerors and conquered, who shall jointly ascertain the quantity and the value of the paper currency, which, by an article in the capitulation, shall lie over till a peace. Nor must the conquerors issue any more notes than the exact value of those in actual circulation before the siege, which sum shall continue in circulation until a treaty of peace shall determine the fate of the islands: and then both nations must stipulate to the holders of the notes, the honourable discharge of them by payment in gold and silver coin, at the current prices thereof, and at the medium estimation of paper currency stipulated in or at the time of the capitulation.

their



their posterity ;—to pay the value of their slaves to capitulant owners in the following proportions, viz. two eighths of their appraised value, for such as shall have been absent five years, or more ; three eighths for absentees, from three to five years ; four eighths for absentees, from one to two years ; five eighths for absentees, above six months to twelve months ; and six eighths for absentees, from three to six months, antecedent to the investment of the islands ; —to allot districts of interior lands, together with the freedom of cultivation, to these freed people and their posterity \*, upon condition, that on their parts they shall be bound, within certain limited times, after regular notice is conveyed to any of their chiefs, to apprehend and deliver up, all future fugitives, in consideration also, of a proper premium from the owner for each.

\* These freed people ought to be restrained from purchasing slaves for service ; but they may purchase females, on condition of their marrying only one wife.

It



It is farther proposed, that such of the crown slaves and properties as shall be thought useless to remain to the public, shall be sold, with a privilege to those who are sold, to chuse their masters, or to endeavour to procure such as they shall wish to serve; that the produce of such sales be applied to the last-mentioned freedoms; that the deficiency shall be paid by the Company, and levied by assessments in five or seven years on the inhabitants, the interest being rated on the advance, at five per cent. per annum. And lastly, that the *code noir* remain in force, unless altered by the general consent of the governor, council, and delegates of the people.

In this plan for reducing the French islands in these parts, I have omitted to describe towns, harbours, fortifications, bays, inlets, and roads. These you will find particularly described in the accompanying letter to Governor *Hastings*, dated “Town Prison of Port Lewis, in the Isle of France, the 17th Nov. 1778.”

I HAVE



I HAVE hazarded an opinion, that the inhabitants of the French African islands might be influenced, by proposing to their acceptance, a plan of a just and temperate government: perhaps you may do me the honour to think the following correspondent to this description.

THAT the capitulants shall enjoy the privileges and immunities of the natural-born subjects of Britain; in which will be comprehended the free and uninterrupted exercise of their religious ceremonies and faith.—That the parochial churches shall be used alternately, as is the case in some parts of Switzerland, for the service of Protestants and Roman Catholics; that there shall be but one Protestant and one Romish clergyman to two adjoining parishes, and that their stipends shall be equally assessed and divided.—That the apostolic missionaries shall be received with all possible favour and respect, as being, of all the orders in the Romish church, the most pure in their morals, and  
the



the most disinterested and sincere in their religious zeal. — That inheritances shall descend according to marriage contracts, and the *coutume de Paris*. — That all orders and honorary titles, shall be continued to men of solid property. — That the new subjects, once taking the oaths to the British government, and claiming under the capitulation, shall not be at liberty to alienate their landed properties, by sale or donation, during the war, nor for the term of five years after the ratification of a definitive treaty, (if the islands shall then remain to the crown of the conquerors) unless in marriage portions to natural-born subjects of Britain, or capitulant subjects, or by legal descent as estates of inheritance; but, that they may let lands or houses on lease, with the consent of the governor and council, upon condition that the lessor shall reside at least three months in twelve, in some part of the British dominions; that the rent reserved be no more than three persons of competent knowledge, one to be named by the governor,



vernor, shall attest upon oath; and that the rent shall be made payable either in the island, or in some place under the crown of England; and further, that the parties themselves shall make oath, that the lease is not fraudulent, and intended to defeat the conditions of the capitulation, and that there is not any conditional sale implied.—That the islands shall be comprehended in the Company's charter, and that they shall enjoy special privileges in them, but that the sovereignty shall be vested in the crown.—That their produce shall be transported in the manner already mentioned to Britain, consigned to the Company, deducting 15 per cent. from the gross sales, in lieu of freight, commission, warehouse-rent, brokerage, and all other charges, except insurance and crown duties.—That the Company shall furnish them in return, with such commodities from Britain, as may be necessary for carrying on their plantations, or for their families, charging, in lieu of all charges and insurance, seventeen



and an half per cent.—That upon shipping the produce, the Company's treasurer shall furnish, if required, cash for a stipulated proportion of the whole, for bills drawn by the owners on the agent appointed by the Company in London to negotiate these matters, and payable in four months after sight.—That the remainder of the net proceeds shall be accounted for, with the account sales and account current, after such goods as are ordered in return are sent.—That the planters shall be at full liberty to cultivate their respective plantations to the best possible advantage to themselves, provided that the commodities produced are not contrary to the statute laws of Great Britain, for regulating the commerce and navigation of that nation.

THAT all the islands shall be subject to one governor general, there being lieutenant governors and distinct councils in each. That one third part in number of each council, may constitutionally be capitulant



pitulant subjects, professing the Roman Catholic faith.—That these several governments shall have distinct powers to enact laws and ordinances, for the good government and internal police of the islands respectively, with the consent of the governor general; and that such laws shall have force so long as they shall not be disallowed by the supreme council of India, or the Court of Directors, in all matters relating to trade; or by the crown, in matters concerning the fundamental rights of persons, and of property.—That when public taxes are wanted, each division, or parish, shall nominate two delegates to represent them in a general assembly, who shall meet twice every year in the metropolis of each island, to assess such taxes upon the people, as shall be thought necessary and adequate, by and with the consent of the council and governor general.—That each parish shall have vestries, to take cognizance of lesser affairs, with power to assess such ways and means as the respective circumstances of



each, and its immediate police, may require, from time to time, subject to the revifit of the governor and council.

THAT free merchants, under fpecial covenants, be encouraged: But that hawkers, pedlars, and foreign itinerants\*, be totally difcountenanced, as ruinous to the people in general, corruptors of flave and dangerous to the fecurity of the iflands.

THUS have I reduced and fettled, under British government, the French African iflands; a meafure which was effentially neceffary to the permanency of the British fettlements, and the general tranquillity of Hindoftan.

I am, &c.

\* By *itinerants*, is meant, a fet of French and Swifs vagrants, carrying *paccodils*, which they vend in the *country*; fuch as infested the ceded iflands in the Weft Indies, during laft peace, very much to the difcouragement of fair trade and the manufactures of Britain, and againft the fecurity of the iflands.

LETTER



LETTER XLII.

To J— M—, Esq; London.

Calcutta, Nov. 5, 1779.

THE numerous islands known by the name of *Niccabar*, run from north to south abreast of the west entrance of the straits of Malacca. The most southerly of these is nearly opposite to *Acheen Head*, on the island of Sumatra, which, in a serene morning or evening, is within its view, and lies in about the  $5\frac{1}{2}$  degree of N. latitude. The most northerly is situated N. lat. 10 degrees.

THE southern *Niccabar* islands are the least valuable, and have not yet been claimed by any European power; but the Danes pretend to have a right in the most northern of these islands, called the *Car-Niccabars*, and have had missionaries upon them



them for several years, but without attempting to make any establishment, or to derive from them any commercial advantage. Mr. Bolts, in the course of the current year, has taken possession of the largest and best of these islands, and exalted the imperial flag in the name of the Emperor of Germany. But the Danish government of Tranquebar, on the coast of Coromandel, have protested against that usurpation, and a correspondence thereon has been carried on between them and Mr. Bolts.

In this island there is a commodious port for the entertainment of ships in all seasons, and there are several other excellent and safe bays, where whole fleets may anchor. The most southerly of all these islands, has a large bay, where the Pintade lay in twenty fathom water, at the distance of half a league from the shore. Upon founding, we found, that on a clear sandy bottom, a ship could ride within a cable's length of the beach in seven fathom water. We entered this bay through the



west channel, called St. George's channel, between the large island and a lesser one to the northward. In this entrance there is a small island which secures the bay, along which a ship may pass, within a pistol-shot, in twenty fathom water. There is another small island in the eastern channel, through which ships go out. The large bay, or rather the capacious bason, which lies within these islands, is divided into three several bays, each of which affords a safe and commodious retreat for vessels. Our ship was piloted by the natives into the centre bay. The greatest difficulty we encountered in this place, was the want of water. The inhabitants, however, shewed us two very small streams, issuing from springs at the foot of two hills; at the same time telling us, that there were several fine rivulets in the island, in the bays to the southward, and in the bay next to that in which we lay.

THE centre of the island, and the south-east and south sides, we were told, were



well inhabited. This island produces plantains, a species of wild yams, coco-nuts, beetle-nuts, beetle-leaves, mangoes, lemons, limes, &c. The people raise poultry and hogs in great abundance. They gave me some very fine canes, of an appearance and taste which indicated qualities very proper for making good sugar. They sold a *pettiaugre* \* load of coco-nuts, beetle-nuts, and beetle-leaves, for about a fathom of coarse blue linen, of the value of 10d. or 12d. The domestic dunghill fowls are small, but sufficiently cheap, for we purchased them for about the value of three farthings in linen, for a piece of an old iron hoop, or a large nail. Tobacco, pieces of old iron, knives, scissars, or gimblets, would have purchased any thing they possessed. For ambergris, for wild pigeons, for wood, for labour, &c. &c. they take in barter, linen, red and blue striped checks, and coloured handkerchiefs.

\* A species of water-carriage.



THERE is a kind of pigeon in this island, which I never saw in any other country. It is of a deep blue colour, and has the feet, claws, and walk of a parrot. Its head, neck, body, and tail, are those of a pigeon. I conceive this bird to be a mongrel breed of the wild pigeon and the parrot. These islands abound with birds of the most variegated and beautiful plumage. I was particularly struck with a most elegant species of the long-tailed paroquet, which is there very common. The coasts abound with fishes of various kinds, which the natives either kill with lances, or catch with hooks made of bones and shells. The bays in these parts, are covered to amazing depths with shells: and as in some places the reflux of the sea leaves great spaces, at regular intervals, open and dry; and as the islands all around the coasts are covered with wood, all India might be supplied thence with shell lime at a very easy price. Good building timber, and even the hardest teak-wood, may be procured there on very moderate



terms. And from the wood of the lances, and the paddles of the boats, which I carefully examined, I do not in the least hesitate to conclude, that the Niccabar islands contain certain species of wood of a very hard texture, capable of receiving a high polish, and very proper for household furniture.

THE harbours and bays of the Niccabar islands command, at all times, the bay of Bengal and the straits of Malacca; and are well adapted to afford to the navigation into those seas, protection against tempestuous seasons, and those unavoidable accidents to which it is exposed by contrary winds, calms, currents, and other casualties.

THE canoes or boats of the inhabitants of the Niccabar Islands, are from fifteen to forty feet long; from eighteen to forty-eight inches in wideness; and from about eighteen inches to three feet deep. Their construction is uniform, both sides being perfectly



perfectly alike in every respect. Their form is calculated for going fast, with wonderful skill and exactness : and though it would be extravagant to affirm, that the Niccabarians are acquainted at all with mathematics, yet are their small vessels constructed for fast-sailing agreeably to mathematical principles. These vessels draw to a sharp point at each end, inclining upwards from the centre. Their prows are from three to five feet in height, proportioned to the dimensions of the boats, highly polished or carved, with a curve at the upper end. Both the insides and outsides of these boats are as smooth as glass, except towards the outside gunnel, which, by way of ornament, is sometimes cut lengthwise, into grooves,

It was for some time a matter of wonder to me, how the barbarians of the Niccabar Islands, with so very imperfect instruments as edged stones, and pieces of hoops or old iron spikes, could excavate so large trees, and form them into neat canoes.



canoes. But I afterwards discovered, that not only the more rugged and laborious part of the work, but also the polish, is effected chiefly by a dextrous application of the power of fire; a method which is also used by the Caribbs of America, but less elegantly, in hollowing their canoes and pettiaugres. They use not either iron or wooden nails in any carpenter's work; all junctures are performed by twigs, or ligaments made of the bark of trees. Their cargoes are lodged within the boat; and the whole vessel is overlaid with pieces of timber across, about two inches in diameter, at the distances of about four or five inches asunder, which are tied dextrously to the gunnel; except at certain spaces, where they are left loose for the purpose of getting at what is in the hold. Upon this platform sit the paddlers, steer-men, and passengers; here also they stow their more bulky goods: our ship's water-casks were carried on shore, and brought on board in this manner. From one side of the boat, a machine is rigged out to a considerable



considerable distance, and lodged upon the water, as a balance. It is a simple contrivance, and while it keeps the boat perfectly steady, does not greatly impede the sailing. But if it should happen to break, loose, or any how to give way, the boat must inevitably overset. As the length and weight of the out-rigger, though formed of a light buoyant wood, renders any care in trimming the boat needless, people move and walk in it with as much freedom as they would on a ship's deck.

THE inhabitants of these islands are evidently of Malayan extraction, having the same features and the same complexions. I never beheld better formed men. They are remarkably square, muscular, and full chested. Their limbs are proportioned like those of a Grecian or Roman statue, only that they are somewhat more muscular in the calves of the legs. Their stature runs generally from five feet six to five feet nine inches. But with all this appearance of strength and activity, they  
practise



practise neither, and do not seem to know that they possess them. In their deportment, they are the most serious and solemn people that I know in the world. They very seldom smile, but constantly preserve in their countenances a grave serenity. Although in their traffic they have often been defrauded by Europeans, as I was convinced by some of their actions and insinuations, yet they do not indicate a suspicious disposition; and they seem naturally inclined to honesty in their dealings. Besides their native tongue, they speak a kind of *lingua França*, which is a mixture of the Portuguese and Malayan languages. I could never discover the nature of their religion; but I suppose it is the same with that of the natives of Sumatra, a species of Paganism. They appear to be a deliberate, cool, sensible people; and as far as I had an opportunity of observing, they are punctual in the performance of their engagements.

AN



AN incident happened while we were among them, which displayed at once their honesty and their humanity. My reverend companion, Mr. Y—e, and the surgeon of the frigate, went on shore with two of the ship's muskets to shoot birds. As they were coming off in the evening in one of the country boats (for the *Pin-tade* had no boat) in which were a few water casks filled and lashed upon the platform, and when they were at the distance of about half a mile from both the ship and the shore, the surgeon inconsiderately leaping upon one of the water casks, either loosed or over-poised the balance, and instantly the boat over-set. Paddlers and passengers were immediately afloat in about fifteen fathom water. I happened at that very moment to be looking at the boat, and perceived the people swimming, among whom I could clearly distinguish my honest friend Mr. Y—e. We were all in the utmost distress, for we had not a boat to send to their relief: but in an instant we discovered



discovered several canoes, rowing from shore, with unusual speed towards the swimmers. They took Mr. Y—e and the surgeon into one of them, and quickly brought them on board the *Pintade*, without either demanding or seeming to expect any reward for their trouble. They appeared happy at what they had done, and in the benevolent act itself, to enjoy an ample recompence for their humanity. The water casks were also brought on board. They were told, that by the over-setting of the boat two muskets were lost, and the surgeon's shoes and silver buckles. The next morning a boat came along-side, with the two muskets, shoes, and buckles, although they had often before solicited, and offered any thing in their possession, for a musket, in vain. These innocent people might have kept the articles they found, without even creating a suspicion of their being in their possession; yet they returned them, and were so honourable in this matter, that they refused to accept



any compensation, other than the entertainment they received in the *Pintade*, for their trouble.

THE women of these islands sometimes row in the boats as well as the men : But the men appeared to be of jealous dispositions, for they seldom allowed them to come into the ship ; and when they did allow them, it was with reluctance, and in consequence of the importunity of female curiosity. It was also owing to the passion of jealousy, I suppose, that the women were very seldom visible on shore. I was surprised to find, among the inhabitants of these islands, so many ruptured persons. I was unable to form any conjecture concerning this matter. There were several of them who had scorbutic symptoms on their skins: this I ascribed to the quantities of fish they eat, and watery yams. I could never discover the cause, why they erect their houses or huts upon posts, raised several feet above the surface  
of



of the earth, to which they mount with ladders which are removeable at pleasure, and which, I suppose, they lodge with the family within the house at night. I have not learnt that there are in the *Niccabar* islands, any ferocious animals which might render this precaution necessary.— Thus we find in the *Niccabar* islands, the origin of columns, and their simplest form, which the progress of taste and of art has improved into the most beautiful ornament within the compass of architecture.

I HAVE often wondered that our East-India Company never turned their attention to these islands, the possession of which would, in so many respects, contribute to the security and advantage of their trade and navigation in those regions and seas. This neglect, however, will not appear astonishing, when we consider the scandalous inattention of the Company's servants to objects of still greater moment.

I HAVE



I HAVE not been at the *Andaman* islands, which lie higher up in the gulph, and nearly opposite to Pegu and the west coast of Siam. The inhabitants of these fertile islands, are represented by Europeans in India, as savage, fierce, and not to be approached without danger. But I have been well informed, that the *Andamanians* are not naturally ferocious: but, having been barbarously used by Europeans, as well as defrauded, they regard them as their enemies, and whenever they see them, they flee from their approach; and if pursued, they resist. The most outrageous violences having been repeatedly committed by Europeans on the men of *Andaman*, and also on their families, it is not any wonder that they have lost all confidence in the perpetrators of the greatest enormities.

THIS people are of a black complexion, and have woolly hair. They are said to have descended from some Caffres or negroes who were brought as slaves from



the Caffrayan coast of Africa ; but who, either by chance, or vigorous exertion, emancipated themselves on these islands. If, by some mild method, the prejudices against Europeans were removed from the minds of the inhabitants, the Andaman islands might be made commodious places of refreshment upon pressing occasions, and might perhaps furnish some articles of trade.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.











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Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa cont. remarks on the ... interests of  
Great Britain: and a new system for the government in the East Indies

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